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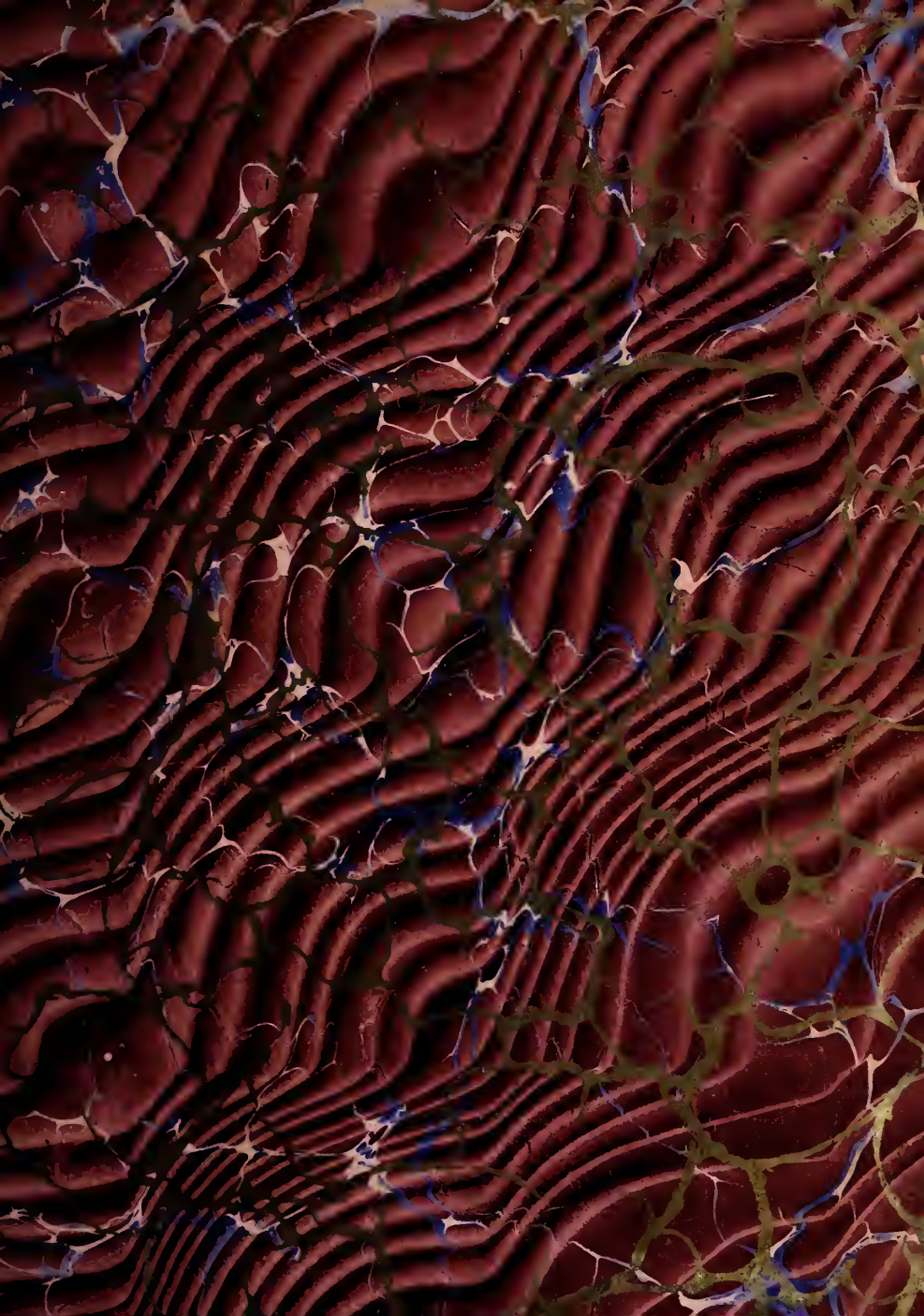



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Robert E. Speer

With kindest regards.

R. H. Fenn

San Francisco July 11. 1911





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# HORACIO

A Tale of Brazil.

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By R. W. Fenn ✓



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San Francisco

1911





## ERRATA.

Least said, soonest mended ! The Publisher humbly confesses that he did not have a Dictionary in the house until the Book was half printed ; and, being Author, Type-setter, Proof-reader and Printer, by lamp-light in the evenings after days of toil, he feels that no apology will be demanded by the Magnanimous Reader.

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Not to the richest nor to the most famous, but to  
the best of men—my father.

Happy memories of sojourn and peregrination,—themselves a romance, woven into form, set up in type and printed by myself during my leisure hours, so that a few of my friends may share them with me, if they so desire.





## P R E F A C E

Upon the traveller in modern Brazil one impression must inevitably be made by the scenes and sounds which attract his attention. Sixteen hours on the train and a day or two on horseback will transport him from the splendid city of São Paulo to the haunts of the untamed, naked savage with his blow-pipe and poisoned arrows. The recent enormous extension of coffee-planting is the cause of this unusual and abnormal contrast of conditions.

While the Brazilian is generally of a mild and genial disposition, the border-land has produced and is still producing many desperadoes who execute justice and injustice at their own sweet will and exercise the sway of feudal lords over wide stretches of country. In such a region the hero of this story lived, loved and was loved.





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H O R A C I O .



ND A ligeiro, Horacio! The macacos are in the milho. Take your gun and we'll have a stew of the saucy thieves! "

A sallow woman, slipshod and slatternly, spoke with languid sharpness to a young Brazilian lad of fifteen or sixteen years who leaned his elbows on the rough-hewn table as he finished stowing a liberal supply of rice and beans, sprinkled with farinha, between his white teeth with the blade of his knife. Wiping his mouth upon his sleeve, the young fellow took down a light, double-barreled, muzzle-loading gun from its place on two pegs, and, throwing a horn of powder over his shoulder and stuffing a little bag of shot in his breeches pocket, took himself off.

The roca was new, and the charred stumps and



and trunks still thrust themselves up from the green corn. The virgin matto grew close to the clearing and the monkeys often dropped down into the corn and helped themselves with liberal hand. The lad was well used to this sort of thing and crept stealthily amid the corn in pursuit of the thieves, hoping not to have been seen by the sentinel that hung from the limb of a tall tree in the edge of the wood and gazed warily toward the house. The lad had already come in sight of the thieves and could make them out as they stripped the plump ears from the stalks and gnawed the milky grains, darting stealthy glances from side to side, between their mouthfuls, in fear of an interruption. Horacio hoped to reach them, yet, by crouching low between the rows and get a shot at them, when a sudden chattering from the tree-tops warned him that he was discovered, and a great answering hubbub amid the corn told him that further concealment was useless. Darting along between the rows at full speed, he tried to reach them before they gained the shelter of the forest, but they were too quick for him. Jumping and climbing up the swinging cipós, laden with ears of corn swung over their shoulders, they reached the lofty tops of the trees and made off towards the depth of the forest. For a moment the lad hesitated whether he should follow them or not, but a trail following the direction taken by the monkeys had been cleared into the forest to obtain timber for building, and, hoping to get within gunshot and teach the rogues a lesson, he pressed on, gaining so much upon them as he ran that he reached the end of the trail almost in range of them, and thus was induced

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to push on into the tangled undergrowth, where his progress was much slower and where he soon lost sight altogether of the troop.

Loth to return to the house without something for the stew-pan, and having little else to do at the time, he made his way farther on in the hope of coming upon a blue inambú, a macuco or a jacú. The undergrowth became more and more dense as he proceeded, and he was soon obliged to take out his sheath-knife and cut the tangled vines and branches which barred his progress. The noise made in this way prevented his approaching any of the timider game, but presently he came upon the well-beaten track of the queixadas, freshly marked by their recent passage.

Thrusting his knife back into its sheath as no longer needed, the lad followed the path of the wild pigs at a trot. For an hour he made his way through the forest along the windings of the trail until, suddenly, he heard grunting and trampling in advance and knew that the game was near. Slackening his pace, he crept carefully onward and soon came to the edge of a little natural clearing full of palm trees, whose ripe nuts lay scattered in profusion upon the ground.

Here the queixadas were holding high festival amid the long grass, but well out of sight of Horacio.

Knowing the danger of attacking them in the open, the young man crept into cover by the path which they had followed and then barked like a dog. The clever imitation was instantly followed by a hush where the queixadas were feeding. Horacio barked again and immediately there was a trampling of feet

in response and a few grunts of authority and in another moment the whole herd was upon him. Coming like the wind, in the form of a half circle with the supposed dog in the center, the pigs, obeying their fine military instinct, preserved their formation perfectly as they closed in upon their enemy. The ground trembled beneath their feet and the leaves and branches quivered at their roaring. It was a moment to try the most steadfast but, knowing that they almost always broke and fled at the report of a fire-arm, the boy awaited with steady nerves the appearance of the herd, and, as the first came in sight in front of him, took deliberate aim and snapped the cap. The old muzzle-loader missed fire!

The angry pigs had now joined the ends of their circle and Horacio was in the center. His only hope was a tree. Unfortunately no suitable tree for climbing was included in the area surrounded by the enraged queixadas. Not an instant was to be lost!

Glancing in despair about him, all that rewarded him was the sight of a cipó, some three inches in diameter, which hung near him. Nine chances in ten, his weight would bring it tumbling down from above, yet it was his only chance. With a frenzied leap, he seized it three or four feet above his head and drew up his limbs, minus one trouser leg, which fluttered from the tusk of an irate boar.

For a wonder, the cipó held. He clung tighter and glanced up:—fifty feet of vine, like an immense smooth cable, reached to the first branches of the great tree from which it swung. His gun lay upon the ground,



already trampled out of shape by the herd. His hat had remained behind also.

Hand over hand, Horacio ascended until he reached the level of this limb,—then, swinging slowly from side to side on the cipó, he finally succeeded in throwing a leg over the limb and seating himself upon it.

The queixadas moved uneasily about beneath him, snuffing the air and protesting with angry grunts at his escape as they gazed up at his swinging legs from below. Some of them vented their rage by tearing at the bark of the tree with their great white tusks until they had stripped it bare, as high as they could reach, and cut deep into the wood itself. There was no danger from such an attack as this, for the tree was much too great, but it quivered to its utmost twig and leaf with the furious onslaught.

Picking pieces of bark and great masses of orchids from the limbs near him, he cast them down at the wild pigs, abusing them the while with his choicest selections from the Brazilian vocabulary.

“Ah, patifes! Shameless rogues! Ah, swine without respect! Ah, sons of such an one! Where is my gun, now? Take this—and render me my fine gun! Ah, malvados, malucos, sem vergonhas:—ye have beaten it out of all shape and usefulness. Take this, and this,—and know that I have wherewithal to buy me a better one, with which I will persecute ye until there is no peace in the forest!”

Tiring soon, however, of this mode of venting his anger, Horacio began to look about him. Night would soon be upon him, for the sun was already fast sink-

ing to rest amid heavy black clouds. The lad sought to determine the point upon the horizon where the sun should mark the west, in order that he might be able to make his way back in the darkness, but it was already too late and the forest too thick for him to make out the waning glow. He remembered that the queixadas might not leave him for days, sending detachments of the herd to feed while the rest kept guard.

Well,—they could not keep a monkey prisoner in the trees, and why should they keep him? He would pass from tree to tree until he escaped them.

Looking up, he searched for a limb which might serve as a bridge to another tree. It was too dark for him to be certain, but he thought that he saw one, and made his way to it, only to be disappointed.

Hour after hour he clambered about until his hands were bleeding and his strength was almost exhausted and, finally, the full moon burst forth from the clouds and shewed him that there was no limb strong enough to bear his weight that would bring him to another tree. Discouraged and disheartened he sank into one of the lower forks of the tree in a mass of moss and parasites, disturbing a tree-toad and a lizard and becoming quickly covered with angry and venomous ants.

Taking his departure quickly, he sought a better refuge and, having settled himself comfortably in it to sleep found that the mosquitos which had only mildly tormented him while he was moving about, had now gathered over him in such clouds that all hope of sleep

was an absurdity.

The moon was by this time shining brightly and the heavy clouds had scattered far and wide. He looked about for a familiar star but could make none out through the thick branches of the trees. The queixadas still tramped sullenly about beneath the tree, sniffing the air from time to time to get scent of him, and he could see them readily in the bright moonlight.

Suddenly, there was a commotion among them and, looking down, he saw them, with evident signs of terror, forming themselves into a solid phalanx and intently watching a dense clump of underbrush at a little distance.

Horacio's eyes followed the direction and instantly he divined the cause of their alarm. From out the thicket two bright yellow balls of fire gleamed like two little lamps.

"Ha, ha!" chuckled the lad, gleefully: "ha, ha!—ye shameless porcada! Senhora Onça will play with ye! I wager money that she will even breakfast with ye."

At the sound of his voice he could see the eyes of the jaguar move a bit, and now he could hear the brush crackle as she threshed her tail angrily from side to side:—then the lamps changed their position and, presently, he could see the dark form of the jaguar gliding stealthily around the herd, which followed her every movement with a bristling front of gleaming tusks.

Evidently Mistress Onça had little liking to pay the cost of her breakfast!

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But—of a sudden—there was a slight scattering of the leaves, a roar of expectancy from the herd, and a dark bunch passed through the air and over the heads of the front ranks, falling full upon the backs of those that were behind.

With one blow of her powerful paw, the beautiful animal broke the back of a great hog and, burying her teeth in its neck, she tossed it over her shoulder and in an instant would have been away, had not a fierce boar sunk a tusk in her flank. With a scream of pain and fury she dropped the carcass of the queixada and turned upon her foes.

Horacio could see every movement from his perch above—for they had long since trampled the ground smooth, and cleared it of brush—and the moon shone brightly upon the scene.

Over and over rolled the great cat, casting her foes from her and ripping great strips of flesh from them with her claws, or breaking their backs with tremendous blows. The forest resounded with the noise of battle, and the birds and the beasts that had been sleeping awoke and fled in terror from the spot.

It seemed an hour that the furious combat lasted, but it could not have been more than ten minutes. All became silent at length and the boy could make out a dark heap of queixadas piled upon the beautiful striped mass of fur which was all that was left of the monarch of the South American forests. About the pile of slain, the remnants of the herd tramped, rooting and nosing the heap to see if there was yet any life in their fierce enemy.

The lad was again seized with anger. "Will ye be gone, miseraveis?" he cried, casting pieces of bark at them. "Have ye not had enough? Wretched scum of the earth! Porcada sem vergonha!"

The queixadas looked up enquiringly at the lad and, as if remembering that there was still a feud to settle, disposed themselves again for the siege.

Now the lad regretted that he had so thoughtlessly spoken, for, otherwise, they might have gone away and left him free to come down at break of day.

The sun came upon the scene at length, so that he might note the relative direction of the limb upon which he sat for a guide to serve him in case the sun became obscured. Not a cloud was in the sky and soon the vultures circled overhead. Wheeling around and down from the vast upper regions of the air, their numbers were gradually increased until at least a hundred big black carrion-birds were describing great arcs above the tree-tops. Soon they settled upon the ground here and there, but the queixadas drove them away. At this they perched upon the limbs of trees and cocked their great yellow orbs at the feast, as though to say:—"We wait, 'tis true, but—the flavor improves with waiting. All things come to him who waits."

The day wore on and the flies gathered on the carcasses until they made a great humming and buzzing in the sun. They also annoyed the queixadas, which stamped their feet and switched their stumpy tails impatiently, but they would not leave the place.

In the tree above, the gnats took the place of the

long-legged pests of the night and swarmed about a weary, hungry, sleepy lad of sixteen who seemed to be the center of interest for some forty or more great pigs, some of which bore the marks of the recent fray in great slashes of the jaguar's claws, while one or two crouched apart with broken limbs.

By afternoon the stench from the carcasses was very great, but the others would not leave them.

Horacio passed another sleepless night in the tree and saw another cloudless morning dawn. His thirst was now become very considerable, although he had partially quenched it from time to time by sucking sap from the branches and small vines about him. Weak with hunger and wearied by the constant attack of the mosquitos, he cut some cipós and bound himself to the tree in order that he might not fall. Rescue he did not expect, as his father was absent and his mother alone upon the place,—her nearest neighbor being five leagues away.

It was about eleven o'clock when, of a sudden, the herd pricked up its ears, stirred uneasily about, and then fell upon its wounded and, having despatched them in an instant, made off through the forest at a rapid trot. A moment later the vultures descended and fell upon the putrid flesh.

Horacio, cutting the withes that bound him, clambered, slipping and falling, to the ground and, quickly hacking strips of flesh from the queixadas which had been slain by their comrades, ate the raw meat eagerly and hungrily until his gorge rose at it and he could eat no more. He then sought his gun, finding

it so twisted and bent as to be of no use. Casting it from him with a malediction, he took his bearing, and started for home with a bit of meat slung over his shoulder.

Confident that he had followed a general southerly course, he now sought to keep well toward the north, knowing that he ought soon to come on some clearing. Hour after hour he journeyed, keeping well to his course, but came to no clearing, and, so far as he could tell, only penetrated deeper than ever into the forest.

Finally, he came to a stop and sat down to rest. The flies buzzed about the meat that he was carrying and the odor told him that it would not last long. Gathering dry sticks, he struck a spark with his flint and steel, and blew it into a flame. Preparing a spit, the meat was soon roasted and he made a hearty meal, reserving enough for the morrow in case of being obliged to spend another night in the forest. Having dined heartily, he stretched himself near his fire upon the ground to rest a moment, and fell asleep.

When he awoke, the rain was falling upon his upturned face and the forest was as dark as Egypt. The lad sprang to his feet and looked about him for a shelter, which was hard to find in the darkness. Remembering his breakfast, at last, he went to the cipó from which it had been suspended, only to find that it was gone: some four-legged thief having made off with it while he slept.

It was now impossible to light a fire or procure a light, for the matto was already damp and the rain



falling faster and faster. After vainly hunting for a shelter from the storm for some time, Horacio sat down upon the ground with his back against a tree and let the rain fall—as he could do no otherwise. Fortunately, it was not cold, although—after the rain had thoroughly drenched him—the weather changed, and it became slightly cooler.

Thus the night passed and the morning brought no cessation of the rain. As soon as it was light, the boy was on his feet. Now he knew, at last, that he was lost, for he had not even the sun to guide him and could not guess where he was. All the little woodcraft he knew was brought to bear and all his quick natural intelligence, but he could only trust to chance and, by setting out at random, hope to come at last to some clearing. This hope, however, was slim, indeed, for there were almost no other clearings between his home and the untracked wilderness.

All day he pushed forward, finding only a few bitter plums for his hungry stomach's satisfaction. Water to drink he had when he wished it by the mere throwing back of his head and opening his mouth.

When night came he was somewhere, but all that he knew was that this somewhere was elsewhere, in other words, that he was not where he had passed the previous night. He knew, also, that his other trouser leg was gone and that his bare limbs were bruised and cut and bitten with insects, and that he was very, very hungry.

"Who sleeps, dines," but who eats, is better satisfied. Arranging a shelter of leaves, ere the light left



him, the lad threw himself upon the ground and slept the troubled sleep of weary hunger. The morning dawned cloudless. The sun soon rose and the jungle reeked and steamed. The wet heat, after the rain, brought the perspiration from every pore and made the wanderer faint and languid.

Knowing that, however far he might be to the north or south, traveling east would ultimately bring him to the clearings, Horacio determined to keep his face steadfastly in that direction.

About noon he came upon some more plums and stayed his gnawing hunger. The inhabitants of the forest, as if knowing that he had no gun, sported about on every side in the most perfect confidence. Once he flung his knife at a 'coon, but missed him. Again and again he tried to bring down a jacú with a stone, but lacked dexterity. Of the sling he knew nothing and could not have used it had he known how to prepare one. With the bow and arrow he was tolerably expert, and, as he made his way through the forest, he came suddenly upon an arrow, tipped with feathers and pointed with bone, lying in the path of the anta: for these great animals leave broad trails where their custom is to come and go to their lairs.

Startled at the sight of the arrow, Horacio looked closely at the ground and found both the trail of the great tapir, and, also, the footprints of a dozen savages upon it. Evidently he had made many leagues to the west!

Resuming his journey, he now kept his eyes open for a suitable bit of wood for a bow, and soon came

upon such a piece as he desired. Roughly shaping this to his purpose with his knife, he set about the manufacture of a string for his bow. He now regretted that he had not kept the tendons of one of the pigs for this purpose, but, not knowing how long he would be from home, he had not thought of it.

Selecting fibers from a vine—which he knew were tough and strong—he twisted them on his knee as he had often twisted fishing-lines and, presently, strung his bow and, laying the arrow against the cord, drew it back to the point and then relaxed it, wearied in his weakness by the effort.

Having thus provided himself with a weapon, and the forest growth being now dry, he made his way as rapidly as he could toward the east, doing as little cutting and slashing at the vines and brush as possible in order that he might not disturb the game, and also that he might spare his strength and his bleeding and blistered hands.

As if in mockery of his necessities, the feathered and four-footed denizens of the forest, which had hitherto thrown themselves in his way, now kept their distance or kept out of sight altogether, and it was almost night ere a jacú gave him a fair mark. The winged shaft sped on its way and pierced the fowl in the neck. Arrow and bird were soon in the hands of the famished lad. Drawing the precious arrow carefully from its neck, Horacio lit a fire and in a few moments was gnawing at the half raw flesh.

It was dark ere he had finished, but the work was well done,—not an atom worth consuming being left

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upon the bones.

Strengthened and encouraged, the boy stretched himself upon the ground by the fire to rest. Instantly he was upon his feet again, with his hand upon his heart:—the sound of a horn not far distant fell upon his ears!

Convinced by this time that he must be well within the borders of the untamed bugres, he felt sure that it could be naught else than the Indians. What was the meaning of the blast, he did not know:—it might be war, or festivities, or a hunt: but he was not inclined to investigate, so, throwing green leaves upon his fire to smother the flames, he seized his bow and single arrow and made off as fast as he could in a direction opposite to that from whence came the sound of the horn; which, after being repeated a half dozen times, was lost in the distance.

Pushing on for an hour longer, he finally thought to rest, when—the sound of the horn again fell upon his ears, this time directly in front. Horacio was at last thoroughly uneasy; fearing that he had worked his way into the midst of the savages: so—worn and beaten about by branches and trees, and hardly daring to use his knife to open a way for himself—he stumbled on in the moonlight, in a direction diagonal to that which he had followed.

After an hour's painful journey, he paused again, and flung himself upon the ground, too weary to be disturbed by the mosquitos that covered his nearly naked body or even to care whether he lived or died.

He was awakened at length by a cold nose in his

face and sprang to his feet in sudden alarm. The light of flickering torches dazzled his eyes, which were still heavy with sleep.

"Found at last, my caboclinho a tôa!" said his father's voice, and the man drew him into a warm embrace ere he could realize what had happened. A couple of great hounds sprang joyfully upon him and a half dozen neighbors came up one by one and clasped the boy in their arms in friendly embraces with quick little reciprocal pats on the shoulders.

"Thou art, indeed, a sad sight to see and yet one that rejoices my heart," and the father strained the son again to his breast. "Thou hast traveled far. Two days have we followed thee with the dogs. We had found thee sooner had not the rain washed thy scent from the ground. But—the Virgin be praised!—we crossed it again when thou wert turned toward home.

"But, come!—pull thyself together, if thou canst and we will sleep at home. Thou art half starved! Take a pull at this cachaça!"

The boy drank greedily and, coughing as the hot liquor brought the tears to his eyes, found his voice at last.

"How is that? Sleep at home?" he cried, wonderingly.

"Why not?" replied the older man, "thou canst almost see the clearing from this spot. It lies here,—about two hundred paces off."

Horacio stared in amazement. "I thought—" he exclaimed, then laughed aloud, and ended by bursting into a wild fit of sobbing which came to him in his

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nervous condition with the reaction.

To think that he had wandered for five days in the woods and was now fallen exhausted at his own door without knowing it! The morning might have seen him making off again into the forest, none the wiser, had they not come upon him where he lay.

Choking back the nervous, hysterical sobs, the lad struggled lamely to his feet and set out for the house, followed by the men, all talking of the strange happening, chaffing the boy and congratulating one another on the happy outcome of their quest.

In a few moments they broke out into the clearing and the humble cabin was the gladdest sight that had ever been seen by a tired boy. Faint and famished, he fell into the arms of his mother, and then dropped asleep in a corner and would scarce awake to take the stew of chicken and the mess of rice and beans which the good woman set before the hungry men.

"Que bobo!" said one, laughing, "what a ninny! Only to think that he had laid him down out there beyond the corn a bit, to sleep! Why didst thou not come home to thy mother, lad?"

The boy flushed and murmured something under his breath.

"And what of the horns we blew? Didst thou not hear them?" asked another.

"Ay, what of the horns, lad?" said his father, resting his elbows upon the table, as he stopped for a minute in his work of stripping a drumstick and looked enquiringly at the boy.

"I thought the bugres blew them," stammered the lad, flushing up again. A roar of laughter came from all the men.

"Ah, that is good! Bugres, indeed! There are none nigher than the Rio Feio," said one.

"Then I was at the Rio Feio," said the boy, angrily, "for I found this in the trail of the anta, with the marks of a dozen pairs of naked feet beside it," and he reached down and lifted the arrow from the dirt floor where it had fallen and laid it upon the table, where it was immediately seized upon and passed from hand to hand. An ominous silence fell upon the group.

"So the Indians are come this way again with war arrows," said one, at length.

"May the Saints preserve us on the Border if there is trouble again," said another.

"May the devil rather take the miscreants who have stirred them up, friend Theophilo!" cried the father of Horacio, throwing the arrow down upon the table violently.

"'Tis the old question of the Brazilian stirring up a fight to find an excuse for stealing the bugre's land. We are a bad set all around, but I for one, José Antonio de Castro,—have no part nor sympathy with them," replied Theophilo, rising, going to the door, and looking out. "The weather holds. We would best be off!"

"What,—to-night? There is no call to go to-night."

"Why not? The weather is clear: our horses are fresh: we would best be home."

With that he disappeared in the outer darkness, where his neighbors soon joined him and in a few moments their horses were crunching corn on the ear in the trough by the door, preparatory to their journey. The men lingered by the fire to chat and exchange surmises as to the probabilities of a hostile visit from the Indians. All agreed that a general attack was not likely, but all were satisfied as to the advisability of keeping on the alert against ambuscade and treachery.

Horacio had already been asleep for some time upon a mattress of corn-husks when the rescue party at last took its departure, and soon the burning rag in the copper dish of castor oil which hung from a hook and served for a lamp was extinguished and the house became silent and dark.







## 2

ANNA.



It was nearly noon the next day when the boy awoke with aching limbs and fierce hunger. Gulping down the cup of black coffee that his mother handed him, he stumbled to the door and looked forth on a day of brilliant promise.

His eyes roamed over the little plantation with avid pleasure. He noted the long green stretch of waving tasseled corn, with pumpkins growing between the rows; the beans on the right and the mandioca near the house. Far away on the hill-top could be seen the dark green of the coffee, with the mamão rising here and there above it.

This was home and homely labor, and he knew that even now the growing crops were needing his strong young arm. Then his eye fell upon the long dark line of the forest, and his heart swelled with fierce anger :



he remembered like a hideous dream, all that he had suffered, and how he had come to lie down in despair at the threshold of the clearing—perhaps to die. He remembered also the rough chaffing of the neighbors and something swelled in his throat, on which he swallowed hard. A mist swam before his eyes and little prickly flashes of anger ran over his body. His mother called and he turned silently to the house and attacked—as though to vent the bitterness of his spirit—the abundant breakfast which she had set out upon the table.

Having eaten ravenously—without a word—he went out and shortly returned with his horse, which he tied to the trough and fed with ears of corn. Reëntering the house, he went to the little hiding-place of his peculiar treasures and took out a bunch of dirty paper money, which he counted upon his knee—two hundred and forty milreis—the price of furs which the old gun and his traps had brought him.

This was his treasure, hoarded for the purchase of a new and better gun. Many times during the accumulation of the little fund, he had seen this breech-loading gun before the eyes of his imagination, with its inlaid silver figures and its Damascus barrels, just as he had seen it in the window of the shop in Jahú. He hoped that it might still be there, yet—if not, he knew that there were others like it.

His mother came to him as he stood in the doorway. “Thy father said to take the enxadão and go to the cafezal, Horacio.”

“Where is my father?” the boy answered, shortly.

His mother started at the tone of his voice. There was a quality there which was new to her and she did not recognize the lad who had followed the monkeys into the matto a few days before.

"He has gone to Augustinho's to fetch the children. He ought to be back by this time, for he went with Augustinho, last night."

Horacio took his saddle from a peg on the wall and limped to the door, saying as he went:

"Tell him I have gone to Jahú to get me a gun. I am too sore to work to-day. Besides, I have struck a hoe into the ground for the last time. Remembrances to the children! Adeus! Until to-morrow, if God wills and, if not—until the day after!"

The mother looked after him as he flung the saddle upon his horse and rode off,—sighed and went back to her work, too well accustomed to have no voice in the family affairs, after the manner of many Brazilian women, to interpose objection or suggestion.

The town of Jahú lay more than a dozen Brazilian leagues away, but Horacio knew that he could make the fifty miles easily before night, although he had not reckoned on the condition of his sore and weary body. Nevertheless, he pushed on and, in spite of aches and pains, reached the town at eight in the evening and drew rein before his uncle's door, an humble little house in the outskirts of the village. All was silent within and the only light visible was that which found its way through some chinks in the wall.

"Oh, the house!" he called, and clapped his hands.

No sign of life evidenced that his call was heard, so

he repeated it in louder tones. At the second call a shuffling step was heard and an old woman unbarred the door and looked out into the night.

"Good evening!" cried Horacio, "Is my good uncle, Sor Henrique, at home?"

"May the Saints preserve us! 'Tis Horacio! Art thou well? Are all well at home? We are in sad times here. Anna and I have just finished the rosary for the repose of his soul—for we have no money for masses. Thy poor uncle was buried yesterday,—God rest him! I came to keep Anna company until we can dispose of her in some other way. But dismount! Dismount and enter! What a clatter-jaw I am to leave the poor fellow a sitting there and me a talking and a talking."

At this moment a young girl of some fourteen years approached the door from within and, looking over the garrulous old woman's shoulder, gravely saluted Horacio. The lad, all taken aback by the news of his uncle's death, slipped from the saddle and led his horse through a little side gate which Donna Brigida opened for him, and, having removed the saddle and supplied him with corn, entered the house with clanking spurs on his bare heels trailing across the wooden floors.

Shaking hands with both women, he fell—rather than sat—upon the bench which was offered him and ~~and~~ glanced about the dimly lighted room.

A long counter ran its length in the middle, and against the walls were shelves on which were packages of matches, tins of goibada, little round white

cheeses, and all the various small matters which supply the ordinary needs of the Brazilian household. A few dirty bottles made up the list and a small barrel on a stand explained the presence of some upturned glasses upon a tin draining-tray.

Over against the tray, upon the whitewashed wall, could still be seen the score of some regular customers, pencilled on the uneven surface, and representing the only attempts at book-keeping of the deceased merchant.

It was a small venda, in the ordinary course of things, and served also as a common sitting-room. Behind it were a couple of sleeping-rooms and a small lean-to kitchen. All this was a common enough sight to Horacio, who had often visited his uncle, his only remaining relative, excepting those of the immediate family circle.

Donna Brigida was already blowing the embers into a blaze in the fogão and called to him to know if he had dined. Upon receiving a negative reply, she proceeded with her work and soon could be heard moving pots and kettles about over the blaze.

Anna sat listlessly on a stool in the front room, immersed in thought or drowsy with fatigue. Presently Horacio spoke.

"What ailed Tio Henrique?" he asked.

"It is not known," replied the girl, in a clear sweet voice, rousing herself upon the stool and looking up at him. "He had been ailing some time. First he would say it was his spleen and then his liver: presently it was his kidneys and then his heart. Alas,

God rest him!—it would seem that he was all gone wrong inside. So he took tea of one thing and tea of another, but got no better. Alas, alas,—how the poor man suffered!

“At last he went to Doctor Pereira, who gave him a long prescription of a most ill-smelling and costly stuff, and, as that did him no good, the next day he went to Doctor Alcides, who gave him another, and that did him no manner of good either, so he went to Doctor da Costa. Oh, the pain of it! Each recipe cost him five milreis to write and five more to buy, and he died with the third. Alas, he was a good man!—although a bit careful with his money. What shall I do, Horacio? I have no where to go!”

“Yes, poor soul,” said the old woman, appearing at the door, “although Sor Henrique—God rest him!—was no kin to her, yet for his woman’s sake he always took care of her. I’ll take her to Father João to-morrow, for the house goes to thy father and there is nothing else.

“Father João was here to see him die, and staid with the corpse all night. He is no ordinary man, and has promised to care for the girl. Yet ’tis well that thou hast come, for thou canst see the authorities and arrange to dispose of the house,” and with this she disappeared again in the kitchen.

Horacio looked at the young girl with renewed interest. “No kin to Sor Henrique!” he mused, “Ah, I remember now.”

It was indeed true. She was the daughter, by a former marriage, of the dead man’s wife who had pre-

ceded him to the better land. The girl was angular and thin—almost scrawny—with a great mass of heavy black hair, like an Indian; large flashing black eyes and gleaming teeth—the latter set in a wide mouth, which was ever as ready to lend itself to laughter as to weeping.

No one would have called the girl good looking, with her sallow skin and sunken cheeks, but there was life—and much of it—in her fine eyes, and some promise in her carriage, although she was fourteen, and still a girl, when a Brazilian is expected to be a woman.

Horacio's thoughts were interrupted by the voice of Donna Brigida calling to Anna to lay the cloth. A bit of cotton which looked sufficiently like a sheet to give one suspicions of its dual office, was doubled across one end of the table and upon this the girl placed the simple crockery for the meal. Donna Brigida then handed in the steaming dishes from the kitchen; for, in some marvellous way, the dinner comes from the Brazilian fogão in an incredibly short space of time.

Both women sat and watched him by the light of a little oil lamp, made of a bit of wicking passed through a tin tube and set in a small glass bottle of kerosene. The elder woman was not pleasant to look upon, being anything but tidy in her dress, and bearing a large goitre upon her neck. Horacio remembered having seen her several times before.

The meal finished, the women made up a husk bed on the floor, and Horacio, after turning his horse in-

to a neighboring pasture, flung himself upon it and fell immediately into a sound sleep.

The following day there was a council of the friends of the family with the village priest and the civil authorities. The house and business were sold, by advice of friends and consent of the boy, to a neighbor for a conto of reis—cash down, as they stood—and this money was turned over to Horacio to carry to his father, after the expenses of interment had been deducted. Possession was to be given the following day.

All the world wondered that there was nothing else to the estate, as the deceased was known as a careful man and a close liver. Anna attempted to speak of a supposed secret hoard, but Father João laughed her to silence and the girl shrank back and said nothing.

The disposal of the girl herself promised to be a more difficult matter than that of the little house and shop, but Father João spoke up promptly :

“Anninha would best help with the chores at the vicarage until I can find her a place in some good family. Come, girl,—make up thy bundle and come with me !”

The neighbors rose and dispersed, thanking the good Padre for his benevolence and glad to be rid of any responsibility in the affair. The magistrate, also, readily gave his assent to the guardianship without consulting the most interested party, but Horacio looked enquiringly at the girl, who answered his look with a wistful, half-frightened glance.



"I'll see thee again before I go, Anna," he said, and pressed the lonely child's hand as he went off toward the town, intent on purchasing his long-coveted gun.

What was his disappointment, on reaching the dealer's, to find that no such gun as he desired could be obtained in Jahú. Here was his trip for nothing! No, it was not for nothing, for he was taking some eight hundred milreis with him to his father. He turned to leave the gunsmith's shop, with bitter disappointment, when the man called him back.

"If you want something extra good for the sertão, I have a Winchester rifle, 44 calibre, fourteen shots without reloading. Talking about guns! This is a gun! Just see here! You pull this lever and—tek!—there it is, unloaded and loaded again in the flash of an eye!"

Horacio took the gun and examined it with lively curiosity—then shook his head.

"No," he said, "a rifle is no use in the sertão. For an onça it is all very well, when the beast is up a tree, but for small game it does not serve," and he laid the firearm on the counter.

"Nonsense," replied the dealer, "I have seen a man flick the ashes from a cigarette in his wife's mouth, at a hundred paces. 'Tis said that there are hunters who can cut the head from any bird with this gun and not miss once in ten times. Ay, 'tis even said that there are those who can send a ball through two birds as they pass each other flying in opposite directions."



Horacio smiled incredulously, but took the gun again while the dealer explained it to him,—how the sights could be altered for distance and also corrected for any lateral error.

“Only a hundred and fifty milreis,” urged the man. “That is just seventy-five milreis less than the other would have been. Come! If you will take the rifle I will put you in a box of fifty cartridges with it.”

Horacio allowed himself to be persuaded. He was set upon a purpose and, fascinated with the exploits of the gun, he believed that what man had done man could do. In a blind unreasoning way he was filled with rage against the sertão and was bent on conquering it and bringing it to his feet.

He paid the man for the Winchester; purchased one hundred extra cartridges, besides those which were included in the purchase price; a small pocket compass, and returned to the house.

The day was well nigh spent and dinner was waiting for him, but Anna was gone. He laid the gun upon the counter and sat down to eat. When he had finished his coffee there came a knock at the door.

“Da licença?” a familiar voice said, enquiringly, and Anna entered with an old woman at her heels. The girl seemed relieved at sight of him, but, having shaken hands—as is the inevitable custom—went immediately to her room, explaining that she had forgotten some small article. The old woman followed her closely. Horacio heard the girl rummaging about in the interior apartment and exclaiming as she hunted, “Now, where can it be? Where can it be?”

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Have I lost it altogether?"

Thus she went on, now speaking aloud and now to herself. Presently she approached the wall against which he was leaning.

"Can it be in this corner? Oh, Horacio!"—this last in a quick whisper—"take me away!"—and then in a louder voice—"Here it is, to be sure! How stupid of me!" and both women came out of the inner room and left the house, after shaking hands once more.

Horacio had started from his stool at sound of the appeal which came through the frail partition, and in which there was a sharp note of distress. As he shook Anninha's hand, she looked at him beseechingly and he pressed her hand quickly in reassurance. With relief in her face, the girl went out and turned her head as the door closed behind her, to make sure that he understood. He was already making for the rear door, and, slipping hastily along the side of the house, he followed the two women through the gathering dusk.

With his hunter's training it was play for him to track them thus, without being himself discovered, and soon, to his surprise, he found that they were not going to the priest's house, which was hard by the church, but in another direction. Finally they reached a small house on the farther side of the town and entered quickly, both of them glancing sharply about to see if they were observed, but for different reasons. The old woman saw no one: Anna saw a bit of Horacio's ear and eye at the corner.

Having ascertained all that he desired to know for the present, the lad took his way back to the town, where he spent a few milreis in the purchase of some very gaudy handkerchiefs and bits of machine-made lace. Why Brazilian women will wear cheap imported lace, when they themselves make exquisite patterns and sell them for ridiculously low prices, is one of the unsolved problems of that land!

By the time he had completed his purchases it was dark enough for him to examine safely the building which Anna had entered. Tucking his drygoods away in a safe and convenient place inside his shirt, he slipped quietly down the street and soon reached the house, which stood on a line with the sidewalk, and from it on either side a wall extended which enclosed a small garden and some fruit trees. The shutters were closed in front and no light was visible through them.

After five minutes spent in inspection of the house from this side, the lad passed entirely around it and decided that he would have to scale the wall to gain any further information. No sooner thought than done! Like a cat he mounted the wall, and there he sat for a moment panting, for he had not yet regained his strength since his adventure in the forest.

Suddenly the sound of fierce barking broke the silence of the night, and a large and savage dog ran furiously toward him from the house, through the shrubbery.

"Ho, ho, my friend! I am fond of dogs, but this noise must stop. It is too bad to do thee harm but,

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thou art champion of an evil cause."

While thus apostrophizing him inwardly, he had slipped off his jacket and rolled it about his left arm. Drawing his keen knife from its sheath, he dropped quickly to the ground, when—with one fierce leap—the brute was upon him and closed his teeth upon his outstretched arm, protected by the coat.

A swift blow and the long knife buried itself between his ribs. Without a moan, he loosed his hold on the rolled garment and fell upon the ground. Horacio heard a door open.

"Lion!—good fellow!—what is it?" called the voice of the old woman.

The quick-witted boy gave a sharp yelp, imitating the tone of the faithful canine martyr; then made a sound of scratching on the bark of a tree with his knife; mewed like a cat, and then spat in true feline manner.

"Oh!—cats again, is it? Give it to her,—good fellow!" Horacio whined and the woman reëntered the house and shut the door, perfectly satisfied.

Certain now that there was but one such guardian of the place, the lad crept stealthily toward the house and was rewarded by finding a shutter partially open. Here he posted himself out of sight in the shadow, and examined the interior of the room, which was evidently the sala of the house.

The furnishing was good, for a house of the kind, and a round table stood at one side of the room, with two long rows of chairs extending down from it toward the other side, in the usual fashion. Against

the wall, facing the rows, was a settee, and on the floor some mats. The interior was all neatly white-washed and a number of pictures hung upon the walls; among them gaudy chromos of King Humbert and Queen Margaret of Italy and His Holiness, the Pope. A large chromo calendar also adorned the wall and a couple of candles burned upon the table.

There were four persons in the room and, of these, two were already known to Horacio. The others were two loud-talking and rather overdressed girls, who had some claims to a rather coarse sort of good looks.

Horacio could only hear an occasional word of the conversation, owing to the fact that the window was closed, but he could see that Anna looked anxious and ill-at-ease, and it seemed to him that the girls were in some way annoying her. Once she gave a frightened glance in his direction, but he was well out of sight.

How to indicate his presence was the problem! After thinking fruitlessly for some time, he determined to risk all and attract her attention at any hazard. Placing himself in full view of the girl, in the opening between the shutters, but out of sight of the others, he tapped smartly against the glass, as a beetle would do.

Anna raised her eyes and looked directly into his. By her sudden change of color he saw that he was observed, and instantly bounded away into the darkness. Almost at the same moment the door opened again and the old woman peered out into the night.

He could see by her face, in the light streaming from the door, that she was in no way uneasy, but rather from habitual caution, sought the cause of the noise.

"It must have been a bizouro," she said, calmly, and closed the door.

Horacio instantly returned to his post at the window, where he remained for at least an hour, observing the interior of the room. From time to time Anna lifted her great eyes serenely to the window and looked steadily at him. Meanwhile the gossip and chitchat went on until, at length, the old woman began to stir about and prepare the house for retiring.

The watcher at the window now saw that he must be gone; so he slipped away again, and hid himself in the shrubbery, nearby.

Presently the old woman opened the door and called: "Leão! Leão!"

The boy trembled with apprehension, for he was too near to attempt to answer for the dog.

"What!—still watching the cat?" she queried, and then turned and went to one of the shutters and laid a bar across it, dropping it into two iron hooks on the outside. Horacio now noticed that several of the windows were arranged in this manner, but, as she did not secure the others with their bars, he surmized that Anna was to be held in the room which had been prepared for her reception in this manner.

Secure in this conviction, his doubts of the success of his enterprise began to leave him. Lights moved here and there: the shutters of the sala were closed: a narrow ray of light shot suddenly from those shut-

ters which had been barred from without. Then—in a short time—all was silence.

For an hour longer, Horacio waited. All signs of life had long ago disappeared. At last the boy crept to the window and gently lifted the bar from its place. Cautious as he had been in all his movements, yet they did not escape the ears of one who was watching.

"I thought thou wouldst never come," came the soft whisper, "but it is all useless. There is a heavy padlock on the inside," and a sob trembled in her voice.

Horacio muttered an imprecation between his teeth, and thought a moment. "Art thou alone?" he asked, at length.

"Yes," came the answer,

"Is the room ceiled or canst thou see the tiles of the roof?"

"I can see the tiles."

"Then wait!"

A ladder was necessary, and a rope. The former could be secured at the house which he had that morning sold, and, for the latter, the rawhide lariat hanging at his saddle would suffice: but how to bring the ladder from one side of the town to the other, was the question. He would think of it on the way, but first he would search the yard.

To his great delight, he came upon a ladder, leaning against a jaboticabeira. Placing it against the wall, he dropped into the street and made off on a run to the house.



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Flinging the saddle on his good horse, without stopping to give him a feed of corn, he slung his rifle across his back, stowed the cartridges in the alforjes, and quickly returned to the house where Anna was; and there he left his horse to crop the grass by the walk.

Detaching his lariat from the saddle, he climbed over the wall and soon had the ladder leaning against the house, between the window of the sala and that of the room where the girl was confined. Mounting quickly to the roof, he proceeded to detach the tiles as gently and noiselessly as possible, and soon had made an opening of a considerable size, with the loosened tiles piled on either side.

The heavy brick tiles had rested upon slats of bamboo, which were bound to the rafters by withes and, as it was necessary to remove a number of these with his knife, the utmost care must be exercised in order not to make the least sound, lest it might awaken the zealous guardian of the house.

The withes were old and as hard as iron, and at least three hours were consumed in the task; so that, for a time, the boy feared that his toil would be useless and morning would dawn ere he had completed the work: but at last the slats gave way and there was an aperture sufficiently large for the girl to pass.

Meanwhile, Anna had not been idle, but had moved a table beneath the opening and upon this she had set a chair and was now standing upon it, with her head only about three feet below the aperture. The rope would not be necessary, after all.

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Horacio braced himself above and reached down his hands to the girl. In an instant her elbows were resting upon the edge of the hole and a great pile of tiles fell with a crash upon the floor!

"Quick! Quick! Or we are lost!" cried the startled lad, his heart thumping with excitement. "Up thou comest!" and he rose to his feet and drew the girl up beside him. "Now; down the ladder, and I will follow!"

The girl scrambled down in the twinkling of an eye, and was already upon the ground when the house door opened and the old woman appeared, armed with a light and a garrucha of formidable size, which she discharged into the darkness in the direction of the young people, having no idea that her ward was already in the patio.

A hail of buckshot cut the leaves from the shrubbery, close by the fugitives. A sharp exclamation of fright came from the girl and she commenced to go up the ladder which Horacio had set against the outside wall.

"Look out for the other barrel!" cried the boy, but she could now be readily seen against the sky, as she stood upon the wall, and the woman would not shoot. "Jump! Jump!" exclaimed Horacio. "Never mind me!"

The girl obeyed and jumped, and the lad sprang upon the ladder. At that moment the woman laid hold upon his trouser leg, but he kicked her as hard as he could with his bare toes and she fell backward into the bushes.

In a moment he was upon the wall but, as he turned to see what had become of his antagonist, a second report rang out, and he felt a blow on his breast as a ball struck him. A sharp pang went through his heart, and he fell backwards upon the grass outside the wall.

"Fly! Fly!" he called, faintly, to the girl whose cause he had so bravely championed, but she would not leave him, although doors and windows now began to open and voices to be heard upon the street. The horse was snuffing at the face of his fallen master, and gazing at Anna in mute protest and entreaty. In a moment they would be the center of a curious and angry crowd.

Seeing that the girl would not make use of her dearly-bought liberty, Horacio made a great effort and raised himself upon his elbow. Finding that he still had control of his limbs, he sat up, placed one hand upon his throbbing heart; then sprang to his feet, cast the rein on Bonito's neck; with one leap was in the saddle and, ere his pursuers could reach him, had lifted the girl up behind him and was off at a gallop.

Clinging closely to her young companion, Anna turned and looked back for signs of pursuit. Horacio kept on, in a direction opposite to that in which the sitio lay. For two hours he pushed on as fast as his sturdy young horse could stand it. Then he felt the girl grow heavy on his shoulder.

"She sleeps," he thought, and turned to catch her as she slipped from her position. The horse had now left the main, traveled road, and Horacio was follow-

ing a circuitous route by a by-path through the matto to gain his home.

Knowing that pursuit was now no longer likely, he let the girl drop to the ground, intending to rest his horse ere he resumed his journey and at the same time attend to his wound, which was paining him severely.

As Anna dropped to the ground, a warm, slippery fluid spread over his hand and he lost his hold on her, so that she slid from his grasp to the grass by the roadside. Instantly he dropped upon his knees beside her and, by the dim light of the moon, he saw that she had fainted.

Hastening to the corrego, he brought water in his hat and dashed it upon her face. As she came to herself, he begged her to tell him where she was hurt.

"Here," she murmured faintly, pointing to her left arm. Horacio slit the sleeve, finding her arm drenched with blood and also the skirt of the dress below it, where it had run down while she was in the saddle. Bringing more water, he bathed it gently and, on washing away the blood, found a small hole where a buckshot had passed entirely through the flesh—fortunately, without injuring the bone.

Leaving her for an instant, he hunted in the dim light of dawn which, as the sun came near the horizon, was now taking the place of the moonlight, and, in a few moments, was fortunate enough to find some leaves which he well knew to have great healing virtue. With these he returned and, washing the wound

again, bound the arm about with the leaves, using the lace and handkerchiefs which he had bought for his mother and sisters.

They were now entirely ruined, for the large ball with which the second barrel of the garrucha was charged, had entered the package and passed through the various folds of cloth and pasteboard and reached his skin, only to bruise and not to break it. Beneath the package was a flattened bullet and a great black and blue mark.

The girl watched him as he worked and, when he drew the package out and exclaimed at his discovery, she said: "Give me the bullet, please!" and, closing her fingers over it, shut her eyes and rested while he removed the evidence of their halt and prepared to resume the journey.

It was now broad day and, as Anna assured him that she was able to go on, they mounted and followed the narrow trail through the forest at a steady pace, until about ten o'clock, when they came to the balsa at the Tieté. The large canoe was at the other side, but the man came at their hail and took them across, while the horse swam beside them.

Annibal, the ferryman, greeted the lad cordially as an old friend, but looked at him curiously and at his young companion. Horacio wondered that he asked no questions, for he knew his countrymen well, and knew that no bashfulness would prevent them from satisfying their never-failing curiosity.

While he cogitated on this idea, they at length reached the farther side of the river. The horse

scrambled up the steep bank, doubling his knees as he reached the top, and shaking himself like a dog, until the water flew from him in showers. The boy patted him lovingly on the neck and quickly resaddled, while the animal nosed his pocket, where there was a bit of bread which he had bought in the town.

Reminded thus of his physical necessities, he broke the small loaf in two, and, giving the larger half to Anna, crumbled off a bit of his own share for the horse and mounted, saying carelessly as he did so:

“Did Padre João ask after me as he passed?”

The man started guiltily and cast a sly glance at him: then he replied: “How? What Padre João?”

“Padre João of Jahú, of course,” replied the boy, quickly, “when he passed this morning with the Juiz de Dereito and the other two,” for his quick eye had noticed the fresh tracks of four horses on the bank.

“Oh, ay: he asked after thee, and when he found that thou hadst not passed, he bade me not to mention seeing him; but, as thou knowest already of his passing, there is no harm in telling thee, I take it.”

“No,—none at all. Adeus! Good luck to thee!” He settled himself in his saddle and gave a hand to his companion to assist her to her place behind him: then spoke back over his shoulder,—“but see here, my friend,—if I find that thou hast said nothing of the girl that is with me, to the priest, on his return; I shall bring thee a fat buck ere this day week be come.”

“The buck is mine, already! I can see him hanging from the branch there by the cabin,” replied the

man, laughing and winking shrewdly at the lad, who smiled back at him and rode off.

The rest of the ride was made with an ear always open for the sound of horsemen approaching from in front, but at four o'clock, or thereabouts, their journey was wellnigh over. Turning aside into a by-way, Horacio sought out one of his ancient haunts and bade the girl dismount and conceal herself, while he rode on in advance to spy out the land.

"Do thou remain here, if need be, until the morning, at whatever cost. Leave not thy post until mid-day. If I be not dead or captive I will be here long ere that. Art thou afraid?"

"No," said the girl, "I have no fear."

Pressing her hand in farewell, he rode boldly on, slipping fourteen cartridges into the chamber of his rifle as he rode.







3

FATHER JOÃO.



UNDER a shed in the curral, or dooryard—in front of the house—four horses were tethered when Horacio rode up to the fence and, without opening the big gate, looked over at the horses as though to get some idea of the character of their owners from the appearance of the beasts which belonged to them.

Two of the animals—by their furnishings—evidently belonged to the mounted police, or gendarmerie,—the others might have belonged to anybody.

Horacio whistled to himself as he thought of encountering the powers—military, civil and ecclesiastical; but the boy was somehow, of a sudden, grown a man, and he did not hesitate.

At the sound of his approach, the doorway had

filled with people, who, upon seeing that it was the boy on horseback and alone, quickly crowded out into the curral. Horacio ran his eye over the group. Father João and the Juiz de Dereito, two gendarmes, his father, mother, and the four younger children, made up the list.

"Ah, malvado," cried the priest, his empurpled face blazing with wrath, "what hast thou done with the girl? Where is Anninha?"

"Where your Reverence will not be likely to find her," replied the boy, coldly.

"Wouldst thou reply thus to his Reverence, unworthy boy?" his father cried, in dismay. "Where is the girl, and what means this mischief? Dismount and give an account of thyself!"

"Under thy favor, my father, I will not dismount until I am ready. What would these gentlemen have with me?"

At this the Juiz de Dereito spoke ingratiatingly: "Horacio, my young friend, tell us what you have done with Anna. His Reverence is her lawful guardian."

"Let him dispute her possession with the buzzards, then, your Worship! I left her down the road with a bullet through her; for which his Reverence's jailor is responsible."

"Where was it that you left her?" asked the magistrate, somewhat incredulously.

"She slipped from behind me to the ground, a good bit the other side of Jahú. See her blood upon my coat! I knew not that she was wounded until she

fell."

"Why didst<sup>s</sup> thou meddle in this matter, young ne'er-do-well? What was it to thee whether the child staid with his Reverence or not?" demanded his father, severely.

"Naught to me, sir, but much to her. She would not go with him of her own free will, and begged my help to set her free. I know not why,—but the cat well knows whose whiskers he licks," and he shrugged his shoulders with an air of affected indifference.

"'Tis all a lie, Sor José Antonio," blustered Padre João. "I misdoubt me much that the lad has concealed the girl nigh at hand and will make off with her and the money when I am gone."

"Ah,—what of the money, boy?" exclaimed his father, hastily, and with suddenly augmented interest.

"Here is thy money! Count it!" cried the lad, in reply, and, with curling lip, snatched a roll of dirty bills, tied about with twine, from his pocket and tossed it over the palisade. His father's face cleared at sight of it and he spread it out on a post to count it; entirely oblivious to the rest of the priest's complaint.

Meanwhile the priest and the magistrate conferred together; the former gesticulating and urging some action; and the latter shaking his head dubiously.

Finally, however, the Juiz de Dereito seemed to be won over and, assuming an air of severity and a voice of authority, cried out:

"I charge this lad, Horacio de Castro, with breaking into the house of the citizen, Father João, by

force and by violence! Men,—do your duty and arrest him!” and he waved his hand to the two policemen.

Horacio was expecting something of this sort, however, and drew his rifle carelessly into view, calling out in a firm voice, as the two gendarmes advanced:

“I have fourteen balls in this rifle and I shall not miss both of you! Senhor Juiz,—we are not in the Municipality of Jahú but in that of Lençóes, and I should advise you to look after the interest of your own district; for who lies down with dogs will get up with fleas. There is business enough in Jahú! Ask Father João where are my late uncle’s savings! He saw him die!”

The face of the priest became purple again with rage at the boy’s insinuation, which was the fruit of a sudden inspiration. He started to speak, but was so choked with wrath that the words would not come to his thick, sensual lips, and he merely foamed at the mouth, muttering and mumbling.

Horacio’s father looked at him enquiringly and the boy exclaimed—with a certain gleam of satisfaction in his eye, as he saw the effect of his last words:

“Arrest me at your peril! I shall protect myself!”

The men, who had been edging forward to make the arrest, paused as the muzzle of his rifle rose inch by inch as they came toward him, and the lad finished what he had to say without seeming to see them.

“Let the good father settle his grievânces with me when next I cross the river, and, meanwhile, it may be wise for you all to mount and be off, lest night

find you far from home. Our house is over small for such grand personages to tarry with us. There is not suitable accommodation for you!"

"Horacio! Horacio!" exclaimed his father, aghast at this defiance and amazed at the change which had come over his son. "These gentlemen are welcome here. The house and all in it are at their disposition." The laws of hospitality are sacred with the Brazilian.

"Even so, father, but the climate is sadly unwholesome in these parts for the people of Jahú, and I should advise them to be going ere nightfall. A dangerous miasma hangs about the place."

Evidently the magistrate thought their case weak, and was not inclined to meddle further in a matter which brought him so much toil and such precarious credit, and Padre João himself saw that nothing was to be gained by further delay or argument.

Turning his back on the lad, with a dark and threatening look, he strode straightway to his horse and flung himself upon it without another word. Gathering up the reins, he smote the beast with his chicote and set his spurs wickedly in its flanks. With a snort of pain, the animal plunged forward sharply and brought up short against the rawhide rope with which it was still tethered, nearly unseating the clerical gentleman.

A roar of laughter went up, in which everyone joined, to the greatly increased annoyance of the discomfited priest. One of the soldiers ran at once to help him and loosed the trembling horse, while his comrade threw open the gate, and, in another mo-

ment the little cavalcade was galloping down the road with scantily courteous farewells.

Horacio watched them out of sight and then threw himself from his jaded horse and entered the house. In an instant the children were about him, and his whole manner changed as he embraced first one and then another.

"Ah, caboclinho!" he cried, "hast not forgotten thy brother? Such a long time thou hast been absent, my José! And Maneco, too—little animal that thou art!"

The two girls, Eugenia and Luiza, less demonstrative, stood shyly by, and told him news of their neighbors.

"Oh, Horacio!—the lovely baile that is to be at Augustinho's on the twentieth, at the wedding, and we could not stay, for father brought us away. Wilt thou not take us?"

"Take ye? To be sure I'll take ye! But now run along, for I am tired and hungry," and he held out his hand for the cup of black coffee which his mother brought him on a tray. Horacio drank the coffee at a gulp and, placing the cup again on the tray, turned to his father.

"I must go and fetch the girl," he said. "Poor thing! She has a bullet in her."

"What! She did not die, and thou hast brought her here? This is bad business, I fear."

"She will help in the house and can earn her keep. She is a plucky one and deserves the right to choose her abiding-place. What dost thou say, sir,—is there a home for her here, or not?"

The father looked at his son with an expression of dim wonder on his face. What was come over the boy? The careless lad had been transformed by the events of a few days. For a moment he hesitated, and then murmured, musingly and doubtfully: "Hum! I like not the thought of the padre—to whom else than to us?—yet she is no kin—who spits against the wind is apt to get it back in the face—well, well,"—then, aloud, "Sinhá!"

At the sound of his call, the woman appeared in the doorway, wiping her hands on her skirt.

"Hast thou a corner for the child that was with Henrique? What is her name?" he asked, turning to Horacio.

"Anna!" said he, briefly.

"Canst thou take her in?" his father repeated.

The woman shrugged her shoulders. Finally, she commenced drawing the edge of her skirt slowly back and forth between her fingers as though she were gradually coming to a decision.

"There is always plenty to do," she said, "and plenty to eat. I should be glad to have her here."

"Then bring her along!" the father said, and went back to his work.

Horacio called out to José: "Oh, Zézinho! Unsaddle Bonito and give him milho."

The little fellow ran a race with his brother to obey the order and their elder brother went off down the road in search of Anna, whom he finally found fast asleep, regardless of gnats and flies which had gathered about the blood-stains on her clothing.



Touching the girl on her shoulder, she awoke with a start and a slight scream, but her face broke into a rare and radiant smile at sight of him.

"Oh—it is thou! I thought they had come to take me," she exclaimed.

"Have no fear! They are gone and will not return. Their hen cackled but did not lay an egg. Come!" and he stooped and took up the little bundle she had brought with her, and which was now lying beside her on the ground.

Anna scrambled lamely to her feet and, seeing that she was stiff and sore, the boy awkwardly aided her, touching her wounded arm inadvertently as he did so. The girl started, gave a quick exclamation and turned pale, leaning against his shoulder as she became faint. Horacio caught her and for a moment her pallid cheek lay close to the flush that mounted upon his swarthy neck. He did not know why his heart throbbed—it had not done so the night before when he was busied with plans for their escape—but it did not pain him to feel it.

Recovering herself in an instant, the two set off together toward the house, Anna leaning upon her champion's arm for a portion of the way, and then walking by herself as they neared the house, and as she gained strength.

The children stood shyly about in wonder at sight of their brother's companion—who was entirely unknown to them—but the woman of many cares welcomed her cordially to her new home. Kissing her on each cheek and letting her rest her head on her

motherly shoulder for a little moment while she winked away a few tears of weariness and loneliness, she took her with her to the rooms in the rear and found a place for the strange bird in the nest.

Horacio sat down at the table and dined, but Anna ate in the kitchen, as is the custom of Brazilian women in the country. Both of them were half-famished, and did ample justice to the hearty and wholesome food.

The following day there was a new wonder in the house. Father and son were busying themselves about the chores while they waited for breakfast.

"We shall go to the roça to-day. Thou wouldst best grind thy facão and an axe," the father said, at last.

"I will go to the roça no more," said Horacio, firmly. "I have other things to do. I am resolved!"

This was too much for any man's patience. That a boy of sixteen should say what he would or would not do, in his father's house! The elder man turned to him in hot anger.

"The foul fiend take thy 'will' and 'will not'! Thou wilt do as thou art bidden! So set to work, or thou shalt feel the chicote as did the priest's horse." Here father and son forgot their difference to laugh together at the recollection.

"Canst thou not have Antonio up here to help in my place? I will fetch him to-day," said Horacio, finally.

"What Antonio nor what foolishness?" he cried. "Thinkest thou that I have money to burn because

my brother left me eight hundred paltry milreis? I should like well to know where is that which he has hoarded all these years, for he was close-fisted as any onça."

"Thou wilt have to ask Father João about Tio Henrique's savings, but I shall pay the wages of Antonio. See!—here are fifty milreis to begin with, from the money that I had saved for my gun. That will be a month's wages and the rest will come later. I want my liberty!"

The father looked again at his son, wonderingly and doubtfully, but he took the money which the lad held out to him.

"What madness is this?" he muttered. "What gun is that which thou hast brought with thee?"

"'Tis a rifle."

"A rifle!" exclaimed his father, in amazement, "and what wilt thou do with a rifle?"

"Leave me alone! I bought it cheap and shall get my money back. Shall I go for Antonio?"

"Ay,—go if it suits thee. So long as thou payest a substitute, thou mayest have thy liberty."

By noon a sturdy caboclo was in the roça in Horacio's place, and the boy was busy about some scheme of his own.

Taking a large knife, he went to the edge of the wood and cut two strong, forked saplings: these he buried deeply in the ground near to one another and then bound his rifle in the forks with wet thongs.

With the help of his brothers, he then arranged a target of boards at a distance of some fifty meters,

and stationed the elder lad, with a bit of charcoal, at the target. By this time the heat of the sun had dried the thongs, and the weapon rested as firmly in the forks as though it were bolted there.

Horacio sighted along the gun and guided his brother's hand into line, directing him to make a cross at the exact intersection. He then warned the boys that he was going to shoot, and pulled the trigger. The bullet entered the intersection of the black lines. Good! The weapon was perfect and the sights adjusted laterally.

He now arranged a new target at the first distance indicated on the sliding sight and shot again, after adjusting the sight. Perfect again!

Thus he proved his weapon with five shots and then, cutting the thongs and releasing it, repeated the five shots with only his strong young arms and steady nerves to aid him. He was amply satisfied with his success although ten shots were thrown away without apparent profit.

Aiming at a chicken in the far corner of the curral, he cut its head off as neatly with a ball as he could have done it with a knife.

Knowing his weapon now—which was to be his new friend and companion—it only remained for him to learn a second and a harder lesson, for the first was really learned by years of practice with the old muzzle-loader which the queixadas had destroyed. He must learn to stop a running buck with a ball.

Leaving the chicken at the house, he set off for the matto and did not return until night. He had

wasted three shots on a running mark.

The next day he wasted three more and brought down a jacú at the fourth, as he was running swiftly along a limb. He now saw that it was a knack, and practiced on two or three running chickens in the curral. The next day he shot a buck on the run and, throwing it across his horse, set out for the river.

"Is the buck thine, friend Annibal?" he asked of the boatman, "or didst thou tell his Reverence of the girl?"

"The buck is mine! A bargain is a bargain,"—forgetting that he had first agreed with the priest to let him know if the girl was with Horacio—"I told his Reverence that thou wert alone. Women are of no account, anyway. We do not reckon them," and he grinned slyly as he ran his hand over the fat haunches of the deer.

"When thou hast need of my canoe to pass the river, or the small one to lie in wait for the deer, they are at thy service, only do not ask me often to lie to his Reverence: mayhap it is a mortal sin to deceive a priest. Who knows? Well,—'till another day!"

"'Till another day!" was the response, and the lad turned back along the river to the house of a hunter. Here there was a litter of pups, from which he had been offered a choice.

"They are masters," the old man said, as he tied the pair together and took the thirty milreis, which was the price of them. "They are true as steel and of the best blood in the country. They know what they know without learning, for it is in the blood."

The boy stroked the necks of the beautiful creatures which fawned upon him with immediate puppy faith. He knew that they would need much training, but good blood is more than half the battle—in pups or men.

When he reached his home, a deer lay across the horse before him. He had shot it from the saddle, as it bounded across the road. He had found the knack!

At the end of the month he must go to Jahú to dispose of the skins which his rifle and his traps had brought him. He entered the town with the hides strapped in two bales on a pack-horse which he drove before him, but he entered at midnight and drove a bargain in the saddle with a merchant whose eyes were heavy with sleep, as he leaned from the window into the night.

The hides sold cheap—for all the town knew of the lad's escapade—and the payment was cash on the nail, with a supply of ammunition to be sent to him on the morrow. Quality was guaranteed, and the man knew from former dealings, that the young hunter's word was good.

Horacio rode away into the night, well satisfied with his month's work while Francisco da Gama dos Santos rolled into bed equally satisfied with his midnight bargain.

During the months that followed, Horacio was less and less to be found at home. Longer and longer were his absences and deeper and deeper he penetrated into the sertão in search of game.

He had bought himself a compass, as has already been said, and now he learned to use it. His knowledge of forest craft grew as he grew, while his dexterity with his famous weapon increased with every shot. His reputation at last began to be noised abroad and some little notoriety came to be attached to his name. At the dances which were given from time to time on the neighboring fazendas, no one was a more popular partner than he or a more graceful dancer.

As for Anna, the arm healed in a short time and the girl proved to be a treasure in the house. Her presence there, of course, was soon rumored about, and came to the ears of Father João in Jahú, along with tales of Horacio's prowess and daring, and yet it was not safe for him to go openly to the town.

This did not stay him from crossing the river, however, and making such excursions into the territory of the enemy as he desired; but to appear openly, and with previous announcement of his purpose, was more than he thought it politic to do.

"Horacio! There is a dance at Augustinho's tonight. 'Tis Emiliazinha who marries, this time. Wilt thou take us?" pleaded Eugenia, one afternoon, when the lad found himself at home after a longer absence than usual.

He looked enquiringly at Anna, who was laying the cloth for the jantar. A flash of interest from her great black eyes lit up her whole face and sufficiently answered his unspoken question.

"Yes," he said, "I'll take ye both, and Anninha, too."



"Oh, what pleasure!" cried his sisters, clapping their hands, and running to pull their few bits of finery out of odd corners where they had bestowed them.

"Be quick about the jantar then, Anna, please," he added. "We must be off at once."

"Art thou not too weary?" she asked, hesitatingly, as she remembered that he was but that moment returned from a long trip. He shook his head and laughed, showing two rows of strong white teeth.

"Not I! Didst thou ever know me to be tired, with the prospect of a baile before us?" Then he went out and made ready the horses and saddles.

When he returned the meal was on the table and they all ate hastily and rode off. Horacio would gladly have taken Anna with him on Bonito's sturdy back, but there were horses enough for all of them. Anna rode on her own saddle, which he had given her a short time before, and his sisters rode, one on a man's saddle, and the other on his mother's. The four leagues were covered in two hours and a half, and at seven they drew rein at Augustinho's.

The house was of the better sort and, in lieu of pole walls and a mud floor, with a roof of thatch—like the home of this party of guests—boasted the only board floor in the neighborhood, while the walls were of mud and the roof of tiles. In one corner there stood a little altar which the women had made ready with bits of ribbon, lace and tinsel, and candles burning at the corners. The bride was already dressed and the bridegroom waiting, but Father João had

not yet appeared, for he was to come from Jahú and perform the ceremony.

As Horacio dismounted and lifted the girls from their saddles, the priest rode up and flung himself from his horse without taking any notice of the group of young people. The young man was not particularly anxious to see Father João and therefore stepped a little out of sight behind the horses, pulling Anna back of his sisters; but he might have spared himself the trouble, for the priest had evidently already seen them and now came forward with outstretched hand and genial smile.

"An embrace!—my young friend," he said, heartily. "Didst thou think there was ill blood yet because of thy little escapade? So the girl is in good hands, I care not! And how goes Anninha? I believe thou art filling out a bit, girl. Better be careful or thou wilt be a plump one, after all!"—then he added, slyly—"I feared me much 'twas mischief thou wert up to, lad—hence my anxiety," and he winked intelligently at Horacio, "but all's well that ends well! Let us go in! They can't have either the dance or the marrying without Father João."

Horacio yielded himself with some hesitation to the embrace of the burly padre, but Anna drew away and would not give him her hand. Eugenia and Luiza shook hands cordially enough, and they all entered the house together, with those who had come out to welcome them.

Greetings from all about them turned into shouts of laughter as the popular priest flung a mischievous

word and a glance here and there, for he was the life of every lively gathering which might be fortunate enough to secure his presence. The late arrivals made the circuit of the room and, by this time, coffee came for them from the kitchen, and those who were entertaining began to bustle about in the final preparations for the wedding.

The bride, a bright-looking young girl of a light coffee-and-milk color, arrayed in her modest finery, took her place by the side of a much-embarrassed young caboclo, before the altar, and they were shortly made one, with the blessing of the Church and the payment of a substantial fee which the good padre tucked away with an easy unconcern for the fact that, no civil ceremony having been performed, owing to the ignorance of the contracting parties, they would be living together in unlawful concubinage.

Evidently the ceremony was deemed the least important event of the evening by all excepting the happy couple themselves, and, scarcely was it over, ere the steel strings of the viola began to resound beneath the nails and knuckles of a skilful performer, while an ancient black woman beat the time upon a drum made from a hollowed log and covered with a tightly stretched membrane.

No sooner were the strident notes of the Brazilian guitar heard above the laughter and congratulations, than the dancers began to move about the floor. All ages and colors mingled freely in the waltz and the wall-flowers were few. Horacio slipped his arm about Anna's slender waist, while Father João grasped the

blushing bride and drew her into the shifting throng.

The night was warm and the pinga stood handily by upon the table: while for the ladies there was wine, although some of them disdained not the fiery product of the cane. With the constant draining of the oft-filled tumblers, the joy and hilarity increased, but, by-and-by, the music stopped suddenly and the floor was cleared for a country dance in which one couple alone were the performers. This was followed by a duet of singers in a comic song, telling of the vicissitudes of an African lover and his lady. A thunderous applause rewarded the efforts of the singers, and thus the fun went on.

Horacio danced again with Anna, and then Father João led the girl out, while Horacio stood by and inwardly cursed the priest. Anna shrank away from her partner as well as she cou'd, and finally broke from him and slipped through the door, with the laughing priest at her heels, but Horacio let her pass and blocked the way for her pursuer. Instead of showing anger, Father João burst into a perfect roar of merriment.

"Ah, the baggage! She thinks only of slips of lads like thyself. Let her go! When art thou coming over to one of our dances in Jahú? There is to be a grand wedding this day week at the house of the fazendeiro, Silva."

"'Tis far—" stammered Horacio.

"Far! Not too far for a bold rider like thyself. Dost fear to beard the lion—eh?"

"Fear? No!" The eyes of all in the room were

upon him now, and the music had ceased for an instant. "I shall not be in the village at the time. That is why," he said, at last.

"Are thine engagements so pressing, indeed? I forgot that thou wert become a man of business," and the malicious padre grinned ironically at the bystanders.

Horacio's blood boiled and he felt that his excuse was not considered valid. After all,—why should he not go? A soft voice murmured from without, as he stood in the doorway,—“Do not go!” The priest heard, also, as well as several others of those who were standing near. Horacio saw and flushed at sight of their amused smiles.

"I will go! My business can wait," he cried.

"Good!" exclaimed Father João, heartily. "I can promise thee a lively time."

Horacio knew that there was hidden meaning in his words, but would not give ear to the voice of prudence. He turned to seek the owner of the other voice that had warned him not to go, but she was gone and he could not find her. Returning to the house, he drank more pinga and danced with the bride.

So the night passed, with shouts and laughter and enebriated merriment. Anna did not appear again, and the young man danced the harder and drank the deeper. When morning dawned, the drum and the viola were still: the women had sought an inner room, save two or three who lay sleeping on the floor. As for the rest of the dancers, they lay with the music-

ians, prostrate upon the floor where they had fallen, overcome with sleep and—pinga, oblivious to all for the present.

At ten o'clock Horacio sat up, with his hands to his aching head: then he got upon his feet and sought the pinga bottle. Empty! Going to the barrel, he filled a glass and drank. Ah,—that was better! In the kitchen they gave him coffee, and went to awaken his sisters and Anna, but Anna was not there.

Going to the curral, he found her horse and saddle gone. Father João was also gone! Giving corn to the animals, he bade his sisters make ready and soon they were on the homeward road. Here the young hunter presently made out the fresh tracks of Anna's horse, and his mind grew easier on finding no other had passed along the same road.

When they at last reached the house, Anna was laying the cloth for their late breakfast. The young man nodded to her but said nothing, and, having breakfasted heartily, took himself off with his rifle and his hounds to the woods, and that was the last they saw of him.

Great preparations were being made for the wedding at Jahú. The family of the bride was one of great consideration in the district and the groom was not less highly appreciated. The ceremony was concluded and the dancing had begun ere Horacio put in an appearance. The first that Father João saw of him was a flying glimpse as he circled about the room with the prettiest girl in the town clasped in his arms.

A handsome pair they made, for both were decked

in their best, and Horacio's best was now the envy of all the young men of the place. His form was tall and strong and his dark brown hair was fine and soft, and curled slightly upon a forehead which belonged to a face more than usually intelligent. A good firm mouth, ornamented with splendid teeth—Nature's best gift to man—made up a most charming countenance. An ungoverned will and a faulty education threatened to mar an otherwise gifted nature.

The dance went on as dances go. Instead of the tom-tom and viola of the baile at Augustinho's, a half dozen stringed instruments furnished the music, while French brandy stood on the side-table, as well as pinga, for the guests.

Horacio was one of the lightest headed, lightest hearted and lightest heeled. Midnight came and all were reeking with perspiration and flushed with ardent spirits, but no one was weary. Horacio stepped to the door to catch a breath of fresh air. A group of men stood without. Suddenly two of the dancers blocked his way back into the ball-room, while those without barred his exit. Father João stood behind these last, his tall form towering above them, and he leered triumphantly at the young man from over their shoulders. Horacio caught his eye and the priest called out to him, with a malignant grin:

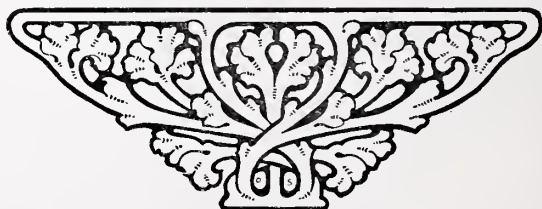
"When we have finished with thee, young man, we set out for the sitio to claim our ward!"

The blood mounted instantaneously to the young man's head, where the brandy had already done its work. Without a moment's thought, his hand went



to his sash and drew forth his garrucha, which he instantly discharged full at the priest's breast, and, in the confusion which followed, leaped over his body and escaped.

The dance was over for the night. Frightened women screamed and ran hither and thither. The police that had come with the priest, raised his fallen body and laid it upon a couch, while others sought the assassin.





4

THE MERCHANT.



ORACIO, meanwhile, had disappeared in the darkness and, a moment later, the rapid beat of a horse's hoofs was heard upon the road, quickly dying away into silence.

Now, at last, the country would be too hot to hold him! Whither should he go? Sobered by his deed of violence, he pondered on the course open to him. Two roads lay before him: the sertão, where he might bury himself and seek refuge with the Indians, or the haunts of men, where he might lose himself in the wildernesses of civilization.

All his nature drew him toward the sertão, but it was there that his pursuers would first seek him; so, with a resolute heart, he turned Bonito's head toward São Paulo and the unknown, untried ways of civilization.

As morning broke he entered the city of Brótas, weary and disturbed in his mind as to the future. As the first house of the town appeared in the distance, he put his hand to his pocket and found but a bit of loose change. Besides this he had but a silver-mounted knife and spurs, and the garrucha in his belt. At any rate, he would have a drink of pinga, and perhaps that would give clearness to his brain and decision to his mind.

He flung his reins upon the ground and entered the first venda which he saw, calling for a glass of cachaça. The woman who kept the place was a homely body, and so he asked her for a cup of coffee and a bit of bread, and sat on a box to rest himself and await their preparation.

Presently two soldiers entered and ordered drinks at the counter. One was a petty officer and the other a private. The two conversed in an undertone and glanced stealthily at the lad once or twice.

Horacio was not caring for police or soldiers just at that particular time, so he thought he would better be going, and therefore turned to the woman to pay his reckoning, without waiting for his coffee. As he did so, the private went out, but returned before the woman could make the change.

"How would you like to enter the ranks, young man?" the officer asked, in friendly tones. "We are short a few men, and there is a pretty chance for promotion now these canalha of liberals are giving us so much trouble in the South."

"Obliged, but I don't care to enlist," replied Hor-

acio, shortly, and, gathering up the nickel coins which the woman laid upon the counter, tried to slip away toward the door.

"Not so fast! Not so fast, young fellow," the officer cried out, sharply—his tone changing. "Better change your mind about going with us. No?"

Horacio shook his head decidedly and made a move to go out. As he reached the door, however, the private blocked the way. A flush of anger crimsoned the young man's face and he snatched his long keen knife from his belt. The soldier gave way instantly before his threatening blade, but a squad of men with fixed bayonets stood without, and formed a semi-circle about the door.

"Put up that knife, my boy! Wilt thou go with good will or shall we bind thee?" asked the officer, blandly.

Horacio glanced about him like a wild beast at bay, but, unlike the beast, gave in to the odds against him and pushed his knife back into its sheath.

"Better take the coffee now, and we shall be going," said the officer, smiling grimly, as though well used to this sort of jest. "And, if that is thy nag," he added, looking Bonito over with a knowing eye, "he shall go along with thee and we shall put thee in the cavalry."

Fierce anger burned in Horacio's heart at this summary disposal of his comrade and himself, but, after all, what did it matter? Were not all his doubts now resolved and he himself safe? For he knew that the army was short of men and would not brook any

interference by the police. Better accept what fortune had brought and not conjure up fresh troubles!

Putting good grace, therefore, on a bad matter, he went cheerfully enough with the officer, and, shortly afterward, Horacio de Castro was enrolled as a cavalry private in the Battalion of Nossa Senhora do Carmo, for the war in Rio Grande do Sul.

It is not necessary to follow Horacio during the campaign in the South, nor during the long bit of soldier-life which followed. The campaign itself was not long, but it was hard, and he was often under fire. In the drill he learned discipline, self-control and obedience: in the army school he learned reading, writing and arithmetic, and, as a member of the band while the troops were not in active service, he learned how to read music.

Physically he grew tall and strong and straight, but he did not grow rich, for the Government but ill rewards its fighting-arm, and that but seldom.

Thanks to the counsels of a veteran who took a friendly interest in him, he let drink well alone and saw many a good soldier ruined for not doing the same.

The day of his discharge came at last, and he laid aside a sergeant's chevrons and the good will of his comrades, in order that he might seek his home, and the great black eyes which he had not seen for years, although they had been drawing him—drawing him, all the time, toward the thin, sallow face of Anninha. Not a word had come to him of home or friends during the three or four years of his absence; for news

does not travel fast among the illiterate.

Bonito had been drafted with his master and now, by a little friendly jugglery, was invalided out again, and bore him on his long way from São Paulo Barracks to the sertão.

How his heart bounded within him as he set out upon his long journey! Now at last he was a man, and would take his place as a man in the world. In his pocket were a couple of hundred milreis, and the Government owed him four hundred more—which he was never to see: at home there ought to be his little, hidden treasure, which only Anna knew where to find. He would buy a bit of land and build him a bit of a house, and then—ah then!—he would settle down and be a serious householder—if they would let him!

Then he remembered those words of Padre João,—the last he had heard from his lips—but the Padre was dead: he had left him with a charge of buckshot in his breast—the treacherous hypocrite!—and was not yet regretting the deed.

Thus he mused, and hope flowed and ebbed as it had done many a time during three years, only now the tide rose higher and fell lower than ever before, and the sun was at once brighter and darker than it had ever been before.

So he rode on, but he did not go to Brótas and Jahú; no, he crossed to the other side of the Tieté and went through Sorocoba, Botucatú, São Manoel and Lençóis, and thus he reached the sertão at last, and his heart expanded and his breath came deeper

and faster as he left the thickly settled districts, the coffee groves and the close-joined farms, and hour after hour rode beneath forest giants, with clinging parasites and hanging vines; and heard the parrots chatter, and saw his old enemies, the monkeys, leap from bough to bough.

The pleasant monotony of the never ending rows of rich green coffee trees was gone, with their nestling colonies of laborers, and the great terreiros for drying the fragrant berries. Only the occasional shout of the men who ran with the oxen that dragged the sacks of coffee from some outlying sitio, mingled with the voices of the forest, except that the distant squeaking of the cart itself pervaded the atmosphere like the music of a circular saw cutting through a sheet of tin to the accompaniment of a small pig under a gate, and both to the time of Old Hundred. A cessation of the awful concert would be an unwelcome bit of peace to the unhappy carter, as it would mean the instant charring of the wooden axles in their wooden boxes.

Even this dubious melody came to the traveler's ears with a grateful sound, when it was far enough away to be somewhat mellowed by the distance.

The voices of the forest seemed to welcome him back to his old haunts, yet they could not have recognized him now, for a soft brown beard covered his sunburned face, and he was broader and taller and altogether different from the Horacio of the old times.

Thus he left station after station behind him and



drew ever closer under the cloak of the sertão, and came nearer and nearer to the sitio. At last he reached the well known point where the road turned off to find it, but when he had reached it, he came to an abrupt halt and looked about him in dismay.

Yes,—there was the road, but it was now quite grown up with capoeira and only an ill defined path led into the depths of the forest. What could this mean? His heart grew sick as his welcome began to fade away and hope ebbed again.

But there was no use standing there like a bobo at the crossroads! Thrusting Bonito with his spurs, he dashed forward along the narrow trail, dodging and ducking to avoid the branches, and slashing with his knife where they hung too low. All the way along he was cheering himself with the thought that, of course, they had cut another and a nearer road out, and discarded the old.

Three hours from the time he left the main road, he debouched into the clearing and gazed about him. Bonito also looked at the once familiar scene with evident amazement and distrust: then he lifted his head high and whinnied sadly, but without reply.

A mass of charred ruins marked the spot where the buildings had been. The mud floor of the house stood above the level of the earth about it, and its hard surface still showed the inequalities which his feet—and Anna's too, alas!—had helped to wear.

He flung himself from the horse and left him to graze where he would, with trailing reins, for Bonito, not being a misanthrope, had already forgotten his lack

of a welcome and was busy nibbling here and there at the green grass.

Horacio mounted the steps and entered the area once occupied by the house. Not a vestige of furniture remained or aught to remind one of the individuality of the former dwellers there, yet the uneven dirt floor appealed to him as though it might mutely speak of those who had trodden it so often, and now were gone, he knew not where.

His eyes filled and he turned hastily away toward the plantation, which was now wildly overgrown with the capoeira of at least three years. So it had come soon after his departure ! Then he remembered the threat of Father João. Could he be living still ? For the first time since he had seen the burly priest lying prone upon the earth, before the door of the ball-room in Jahú, a dark presentiment and ugly fear came upon him, and yet it seemed as though it could not be.

He remembered the trouble with the savages, that had boiled beneath the surface for so many months. Surely it must have been they who had wrought this devastation ! A thousand times better—

Turning away from the coffee that was scarce visible, and from the corn-field that was a jungle, he sat upon the old chopping-block and bowed his head in his hands.

Not a sound broke the silence save the jingle of Bonito's bit as he munched the grass, the shrill call of the macuco and the metallic "tank ! tank !" of the araponga, which came from the forest.

A deer bounded suddenly out of the wood, and as suddenly vanished at sight of the intruders. Horacio raised his head and, with dull misery gnawing at his heart, drew the saddle from Bonito's back and began to make a fire, although he knew not what he should use it for, having nothing with him save a bit of dry bread.

Following the old trail to the cafezal; cutting the green growth as he passed, in order to push his way through, he found an abundance of ripe mamão. It would help out the bread a bit to have this fruit and in the morning he would return—but whither?

There are dropping-off places in our lives, and Horacio was come to one of these. Yet he must make up his mind to go somewhere or starve, for there was nothing at the old sitio to satisfy hunger, unarmed as he was and unable to provide himself with game of any sort. Should he buy himself a gun and go back to his old trade again? Somehow his heart revolted at the thought of seeking the solitude of the forest in his great loneliness.

Thus he fell asleep, wrapped in his heavy pala, in a turmoil of conflicting emotions, and with the matter still undecided, to awake at break of day to finish his mamãos and gallop off on Bonito toward the civilization which he had so lately left.

Not long after he had reached the main road, he came upon a man traveling in a direction opposite to his own. The stranger saluted him and checked his horse as Horacio drew rein.

"Bom dia!" he said, in response to the ex-cavalry-

man's salutation.

"Can you tell me if there is a fazendeiro in the vicinity, of the name of Castro?" the young man asked him; hoping against hope for some news of his people.

"Castro,—Castro?" the other mused, "that would be Antonio García de Castro—no?"

"No," replied Horacio, trying not to betray his eagerness, "the man I am seeking is one José Antonio de Castro."

"Ah, now I know!" cried the other, his face lighting with comprehension, "he lived five leagues from here, on Riberão Velho. 'Tis three years now since the bugres wiped out the fazenda and all that were on it, except the son who shot the priest at Jahú and got away. Father João would give a pretty penny, I warrant, to get his fingers on him."

Horacio started and then restrained himself. "Father João was the priest who was shot, was he?" he asked, with what indifference he could assume.

"Ay,—the job was well done, too, and he like to have died of it, for there were seven buckshot in him, but although he was so well perforated, his soul did not get out, and he got well at last, after he had spent twenty contos on the doctors, and cheap at that, for he lay fourteen months on his bed ere he could move."

An exultant thrill of savage satisfaction ran over the young man as he thanked the stranger and rode on. Better far that Anna and all the rest had perished at the hands of the savages or in the flames of the burning buildings! Better for all to be over than

that worse things had befallen them!

He rode on his way with a bleeding heart and yet with a strange feeling of thankfulness, stopping only for refreshment here and there, until he reached São Manoel, a large and beautiful town set against the sloping hillside like clustered corn upon the ear.

Weary and objectless he took his disheartened way along the street, when a hearty voice called him by name, and, looking up, he saw a man of soldierly bearing, whom he at once recognized as the colonel he had often served as orderly. His hand went up instantly in salute.

"Whither art thou bound, Horacio?" the officer enquired, affably, as the young man dismounted and stood before him.

"I am but now returned from the sertão, where I sought my family, but—but—they are all gone."

"What,—moved away? So thou art seeking them now?"

"No, senhor," he replied, gulping hard at the sound of the first friendly voice, "they are dead—all dead. Slain by the Indians!"

"What! Oh,—I am sorry. When did it happen? What wilt thou do?"

"I know not what I shall do, senhor, unless I return to the army. The matter happened long ago," replied Horacio, reversing the order of his answers, and then he told him of the attack by the Indians.

"'Twould be well thought to enlist again, but,—stay a moment!—I have an idea. Hast thou a talent for business? I know thee to be sober and honest.

There is a venda on my place here, which is about to change hands. If thou carest to buy it, thou canst get it at a low figure."

"I have but two hundred milreis and the four hundred odd that the Government owes me," objected Horacio, doubtfully.

"Hum! The four hundred are a thing of the future—distant future. We would best not consider them. But, look! If my credit can serve thee, we shall strike a bargain. Come on with me!"

Carried along by the enthusiasm of his colonel, the young man led his horse by the reins and followed him as he made his way to his own house. The officer owned a fazenda near by, as well as his own house in town and a number of others, which he let. Among these last was a small venda, or shop, which had changed hands often, to the great loss of rentals, and so the provident Colonel had thought of the excavalryman as a steady tenant for the place.

The venda was small affair, but it was capable of expansion under an energetic hand, and much business came to the town. Horacio looked the place over and, foot-free as he was, easily came to a decision. He gave his ready cash and a note for the remaining five hundred milreis of the purchase price—which the Colonel guaranteed—and was put in immediate possession of the place; so that the hunter and soldier was now become a merchant.

Back of the venda were living-rooms, and the young man hunted an old woman to cook and clean for him. Trade grew with thrift, and Horacio was pop-



ular. The place soon came to be a resort for loungers in the evenings and brisk trade in the daytime, and the proprietor was busy enough to be kept from dwelling on matters of which it were better not to think. Alas!—that which is without remedy is remedied already.

The Colonel's furlough was soon over and he was gone. The life of one day was very like the life of another. In the morning the caipiras passed and he bought fresh vegetables, sugar, cheese, tobacco and cachaça, or else he left his shop in the care of his ancient housekeeper and sought the wholesaler for matches, twine and other manufactured goods. As his trade grew, his stock grew with it, and some day soon he hoped to be able to pay his debt and accumulate a surplus.

One day a peddler entered the shop and stood by the doorway, wiping his sweaty brow with a great bandanna handkerchief. Horacio looked at the man with some interest. He was old and as black as African darkness, and his grizzled hair and beard stood out in contrast with his dusky skin. His eyes were covered with a pair of huge blue spectacles, and his legs protected with high boots. Jangling spurs dragged at his heels, for he rode a mule and carried his wares in a mala made of stout cloth, a double-ended sack, in fact, which hung across his saddle, loaded at both ends. This he laid upon the counter with his pala; gazing slowly about the room as he mopped his brow.

"Does the senhor read?" he asked, in kindly tones,



as he drew a number of books from one end of the mala.

"Yes," replied the young merchant. "What have you there? Romances?"

"Better than that, my young friend—better than that! I have here the secret of a happy life, the key to infinite treasures, the guide to Heaven."

The old negro crooned the words in a sort of mellow rythm and Horacio smiled in intellectual patronage. So the old man was but half-baked!—but he would see what he had, at any rate. Perhaps some volume to while away the hours,—for he had no book of his own. The stranger laid out a number of books of all sizes and styles.

"I cannot afford one of these," said Horacio, shaking his head positively, "all leather and gold."

The peddler chuckled to himself as if it were a huge joke. "Pauh!" he ejaculated. "Business bad in this part of the country? Cannot afford two milreis to learn the way of life? Here is a fine one,—large type and good binding. Only two milreis! It costs more than that, sor, to make it up, but they sell it cheap, and at a loss, that everyone may have a chance to get it. Take the book, for I cannot stop long. I must push on to Botucatú."

Horacio turned the large and handsome volume over and over in his hand. On the back, in letters of gold, was a single word, "BIBLIA". So this was the Bible,—a book he scarcely knew by reputation, and that reputation only evil. Curiosity mastered him. He would investigate. Drawing a ragged bit of

paper money from the till, he handed it to the old negro, who immediately repacked his books and rode on, while the lad set the volume on a shelf and gave his attention to customers who had entered.

When leisure came, as it did come by spells, he read the book, beginning at the first page, and found it of some interest, although all of it did not seem clear to him. Here and there he came upon a familiar phrase or story, the origin of which he had never known before, and he marveled much that this book, of which he had heard so much evil spoken, should have, written on the title page:

“TRANSLATED INTO PORTUGUESE ACCORDING TO THE LATIN VULGATE BY PADRE ANTONIO PEREIRA DE FIGUEIREDO. Edition approved in 1842 by QUEEN MARY II, consulting with the PATRIARCH ARCHBISHOP-ELECT of Lisbon.”

Why should a padre translate what was evil into the vulgar tongue? But perhaps it was to sell the book and raise money for the Church. At any rate, he was not predisposed in favor of the padres and would see for himself what there was in the book. So he went on to read of Abraham and Joseph and Moses and David and Solomon, and then he did not seem to understand very much of what followed.

Now there was an old man who came that way at times, and sat in his doorway on a barrel that stood there, to pass the time of day with him and chat about one thing or another. He never bought much of anything, and it did not seem likely that he had

wherewithal to buy. Horacio liked the old man, but he was evil spoken of in the neighborhood.

One day the old fellow stopped at the door while Horacio was reading. The young man glanced up, and, nodding in a friendly way, returned to his book.

"Understandest thou what thou readest?" of a sudden, the old man asked.

The shopkeeper looked up again and laughed as he ran the pages through his fingers. "The book is diverting. Part of it is funny and part is full of tales. Just now I have come to a place where I understand nothing, but I am not half done yet."

"Turn on a bit further, my boy, and start afresh at the Gospel of Matthew, and, if thou dost not understand, let me know when I pass again," and the old man took his cane and moved slowly off down the street.

Horacio was surprised to find that his friend was acquainted with the book, but he looked a bit further along through its pages and came to a place where he saw the words, "São Matheus", at the beginning of a chapter, so he paused there and began to read.

At first he thought that the old man had been diverting himself at his expense, for he came upon a long list of names that he could not pronounce, or understand, but afterwards he came upon a story, and, as he read, the interest grew.

When the old man came again he had many questions to ask him, and the old man told him why all the stories were in the book and what it all meant.

At first Horacio did not believe and was only in-

terested, but there came a time at last when he knew that the book was written for him, and that he could never more have peace in the old life.

"How comes it that you know of the book and the meaning of it, Sor José?" he asked one day, in wonder.

"Ah,—I have known these many years. Our brethren of North America came down to tell us the good news. There was one, Meestare Shambareleen<sup>1</sup>, that went on horseback through all this country to the sertão, telling the Way of Life; and I went with him to care for the animals, which was no light and pleasant task, either, I tell you!—not the caring for the horses—that was nothing! but the other: for they stoned him and reviled him and drove him from the towns, yet he showed no fear. So we went from place to place, and I heard him speak and plead with men, and set before them the Way of Life, until God took away the heart of stone that was in me, and put in its place a heart of flesh. Since then I have grown old studying the Book."

"And what of this Meestare Sham—Sham—how do you call it? Where is he now?"

"Shambareleen is the name. He has gone to another field in the North. But there are others of the North Americans, and now there are Brazilians who do the same. Here in São Manoel there is no one, save myself only."

Thus the days went by, and what with José Capitação and what with the Book, Horacio was brought to the feet of the Saviour with conviction of sin, and

1 The late Rev. Geo. W. Chamberlain, D. D., to whose Christian enthusiasm and devotion the Protestant Church in Brazil owes such a lasting debt.

there he found hope and forgiveness.

One night the Lord Christ called him, and he answered, "Yes, Lord—what wilt thou have me to do?" and the answer came, "I would have thee preach to thy people, which are my people. I need thee for Brazil."

Then Horacio fall asleep in peace and awoke a new creature, with a new hope, a new joy, a new faith, and some great problems to resolve.

That day José Capitão came again and Horacio had many more questions to ask him, but the old man saw by his face that he was born anew and took him to his breast in a warm embrace, while the tears of joy filled his old eyes brim full.

"Where can one go, Sor José, to learn of the Book? I want to study, so that I can explain it to others," he finally managed to ask him.

"Oh,—there is the American School at São Paulo, and then the Theological Seminary—but all that takes money."

"Yes, but how long must I study—six months?—a year?"

"More than that. More than that. I fancy it must take four or five years at least."

"Five years! Ah, that is much. How can I study for five years?"

"The Lord will provide. If He needs thee for the work, He will surely open the way."

"Oh, I must go! There is no other way. If I begin, will He do the rest?"

"Thou canst but try Him, lad. His promises are

sure."

"Then I will try Him at once," said the young convert, firmly, and began to move about the shop with a sheet of paper and a pencil, counting the things on the shelves.

"What art thou doing," asked old José, in wonder.

"I am counting up what I have, in order that I may sell it to advantage," he replied.

"Not so fast! Not so fast! Better look ahead and count the cost."

"I have counted the cost. Doth not the Book say that the just shall live by faith? My people have walked in darkness too long."

"But thy friends and thy family? Hast thou not obligations to them?"

"They are all gone. I owe no man anything save the debt that is on this shop, and that I shall pay." Suddenly, as he spoke these words, a memory seized him of the priest, Father João, but he shook it off. Then he went on with his rude inventory and soon was able to estimate that his stock and the goodwill of the business—which were now of much greater value than when he took the place—ought to pay his debt and leave him with five or six hundred milreis in hand.

The old man took his departure soon, after pressing his hand warmly and again cautioning him against undue haste. Horacio closed the shop-door in the face of custom, and went to make a trade with one who had desired a partnership with him for some time.

Shortly afterwards he returned with the prospective purchaser, to show him the place. A bargain was finally concluded, which liquidated the debt, and gave the retiring young merchant six hundred milreis. Possession was to be given the next day, but the new proprietor came behind the counter at once.

The only thing which remained to be done was to write a letter to the Colonel, and on this task Horacio spent his evening.







5

THE CONVICT.



ORACIO lay upon his bed that night, turning many plans and projects in his brain, when, suddenly, the thought of Father João came to him again. Would it be right and becoming for a minister of the Gospel to go about with such a matter hanging over him? Would not the Gospel be brought to shame if some man should stand out and point his finger at him and say,—“Satisfy the State for thy crime ere thou speak in that Name!”

Now Horacio had never felt one least atom of regret for what he had done until he had been constrained by the love of 'Christ to lay this sin at the Saviour's feet, and he knew that the Blood had washed away the stain, but that knowledge did not give him rest and peace. Divine Justice was satisfied, but human justice still cried out for atonement.

Why need anyone know? He could change his name, and, by the time he had completed his studies, he might walk safely up and down the land. Then he remembered that he had already changed his name and taken upon himself a New Name, and it was not fitting that such a stigma should attach to the new one.

"If thy brother have aught against thee—" Ah, he would first seek out Padre João and confess his fault and beg for forgiveness, and, if he gave it, well enough, but, if not, his hands would be clean of the fault and he might disappear.

Then he remembered what manner of man the priest was, and how he was hot for vengeance; and knew that he could hope for no mercy there, nor peace in his own heart if he hid himself. No,—there was no escape for him: he must give himself up to the authorities and take the consequences; and then, when he had served his time, he might think of the ministry. Having made this resolve, he turned over in bed and slept.

José Capitão was awakened the next morning to find the young man on horseback before his door.

"Dismount! Dismount!" the old man cried, "I am right glad to see thee. Wilt thou stop with me for a few days?"

"No, no! I am off for Jahú."

"Jahú? Jahú? There is no school in Jahú."

"No, there is no school there but there is a—prison," said the young man, gloomily.

"How,—a prison?" was the puzzled reply. "What hast thou to do with the prison in Jahú? But dis-

mount and tell me about it! Here I am like an old chuckle-head, keeping thee in the saddle. Wait, while I speak for the coffee! Now, go ahead with thy tale! I am ready."

So Horacio told his story to the wondering old man and bade him farewell.

"Well, well! The pain of it! Oh, the pain of it! Yet I know not but that thou art right. I feel myself small to advise. If I should say 'go not', it may be the will of God for thee to go; and if I should say 'go', it may be His will that thou shouldst not go. Let us look to Him for guidance, and then, if thou be still of the same mind and resolved upon going, go!—and the Lord go with thee!"

So they two stood up at the table where the emptied coffee cups were sitting, and Sor José lifted up his heart and voice in prayer, after which Horacio threw himself into his arms, shook hands with the old man's wife, and, flinging himself upon Bonito, galloped off.

Two days later he rode into Jahú, as night was falling, and put up at a small hotel in the place.

As they were getting ready a bite for him to eat, he sat dejectedly by the table, staring at nothing and thinking of the same. He had come to a point where he could not think. All the warmth of heart which he had felt when his resolve was freshly made, had now departed. Almost it seemed that his guiding-star had forsaken him. He lifted his eyes and glanced about the dusky room, which was illumined by the usual bit of wick in a bottle of kerosene.

Opposite to him upon the wall was a strange-looking photograph in a dingy black frame. He could not make it out in the obscurity, but it excited his curiosity so much that at last he arose and went over to examine it.

In the center of the picture Father João was sitting up in his bed, nude to the waist, and looking wan and emaciated. On each side was a physician supporting the injured man, while against the white skin of his body Horacio counted seven little round black spots.

The innkeeper came in and found him looking at the lugubrious portrait. With an exclamation of ecstatic pride, he explained to his guest:

"That is our priest, Father João! He was ill many months and no one thought he would live. A young ruffian shot him, after stealing a girl who was the good priest's ward. Father João had him arrested and the lad shot him and got away, but the judgment of God fell upon his house, for the bugres slew all his family and burned their house to the ground shortly afterward."

"So your priest is very popular with you?"

"Oh, yes, he is well liked. A finer man never lived. Some complain that he is a bit spritely to be wearing the cassock, but, for my part, I like him the better for it. Those that go about with a face as long as a fiddle are quite likely greater rogues for all of their pious looks, while Father João was the life of a wedding or a christening, and, though his prices were a bit stiff, yet they were no worse than

the others. What he made he spent here in the town, and all he had hoarded went to pay the doctors while he was ill, so we have it all back again in one way or another; for the doctors from São Paulo stopped at my house, and thus what I paid for christenings came back again in due time," and he chuckled at his own wit.

Horacio liked neither the picture nor the subject of the conversation, so he gladly turned in silence to the food which, by this time, the talkative landlord had placed upon the table.

On the morrow he presented himself to the Juiz de Dereito, who was not the same magistrate who had accompanied Father João on his memorable visit to the sitio, years before. When Horacio had finished explaining what had brought him there, the worthy gentleman laid down his pen and looked at him in astonishment.

"So you are the lad who shot Father João, and you have come to surrender yourself? Que diabo! Well, I never! What in the name of all-possessed do you want to do that for?"

"I committed an offense against the State, and I want to make it right."

"Just so! Well, you can make it right with the State a good deal easier than with Father João, I take it; for, if he catches you..... However, that is none of my concern, and he is out of town at present. Let me see....."

Horacio's spirits rose somewhat, both on knowing that his enemy was away and on finding the magis-

trate kindly disposed.

"Let me see," he continued, "I tell you truly, I would prefer not to take cognizance of this affair, and would turn you loose if I could. You say you have served three years in the army and are a sergeant with an honorable discharge—yet that counts for nothing at law. Fortunately for you, the jury is sitting now. Let me see....."—turning to his clerk or secretary—"Put this case on the docket for to-day, and we will get it out of the way at once. It may be better for all of us. No?" and he glanced shrewdly at Horacio. "Let me see..... Shall we find you an attorney?"

"I think not, sir. There is but little to be said, and I can say it very easily for myself, but I thank you very much for your kindness."

"Not at all. Not at all. Sit down over there while my secretary makes out the papers, and I shall give you into custody at once."

"Your Worship! may I ask that my horse be delivered to Francisco da Gama dos Santos, in case I am condemned? He knows me and will care for the animal."

"Yes, to be sure! To be sure! But, perhaps, it will not be necessary. Who can tell?" said the kindly magistrate, as he bundled together a bunch of documents and indicated the young man with a wave of his hand to the soldier who came at his call.

A gleam of hope came to Horacio, and he followed the man with a lighter heart. The soldier evidently knew from the judge's manner that no forcible res-

traint or rough treatment was necessary, and, presently, he ushered him into a cell occupied by a half a dozen rough-looking men.

The place was clean enough, and cots stood in an orderly fashion against the wall on either side. A soldier sat at the grated door, and the iron bars of the window were fixed in an iron frame which was let into the masonry. The floor was of cement and was evidently laid upon stone. The men greeted Horacio as a companion in iniquity and the young man had been too long a soldier not to know how to respond in a friendly fashion, and yet have them keep their distance.

When he had frankly told them the nature of his offense, he evidently became a hero in their eyes, for, looking down upon them from the wall by the door was a copy of the selfsame portrait of the padre with seven holes in him; but, when they learned that he had come back voluntarily, after nearly four years, to surrender himself, they set him down for a fool, and their respect for him was materially lessened.

About eleven o'clock, the same soldier who had brought him there, came to conduct him to his trial, and in a few moments he found himself in the courtroom, where the Jury was assembled. The case was soon called, and the clerk read the accusation, upon which, all eyes were turned toward the prisoner with unusual interest. As there were no witnesses either for or against the accused, he was permitted to tell his own story, which he did in a frank and manly fashion, evidently strongly impressing both Judge and



Jury in his favor, when, suddenly, as he concluded, there was a stir in the court-room and Father João walked in.

No one had noticed a man slip out of the court-room while the accusation was being read, nor did anyone know that Father João had unexpectedly returned the night before. The Judge flushed slightly, but made as though he had not noticed the interruption caused by the turning of every head in the room toward the door.

"Gentlemen! you have heard the evidence....." he began, when Father João broke out,—“Your Worship! I request the privilege of being heard.”

“Ah, Father João! Is it your Reverence?” said the Judge, with affected innocence, looking up at the priest. “Well, you have the privilege of speaking, but I would suggest that you secure an attorney to represent you.”

“Yes,—just so!—and, meanwhile, your Worship will shuffle this young miscreant through the Jury and out the back-door to pay me off for that election business!”

An appreciative grin became visible on the faces of the audience, and the Judge seemed to recognize that he was on boggy ground, but the dignity of his office demanded that he protest.

“Have a care, your Reverence! You forget yourself. I cannot listen to such language. Sergeant! kindly conduct his Reverence to the door.”

“I ask your pardon for my—frankness, your Worship. Officer, I will not trouble you! Gentlemen of

the Jury, —I ask the full penalty of the law for this young man! He is self-confessedly guilty and must pay the penalty. Gentlemen,—remember your duty to the State and to your injured—I may say—your martyred shepherd: one who, in defence of the virtue and innocence.....”

“Your Reverence!” shouted the Judge, recovering himself, “this is very irregular. Gentlemen, the case is closed. You may retire!”

The priest fixed a meaning and menacing glance upon certain ones in the jury-box and sat down in the nearest chair, whereupon the Jury arose and left the room. Horacio now felt assured that he was not to get off as lightly as he had begun to hope, and he nerved himself for a most unfavorable verdict. In a few moments the Jury filed into the box and their verdict was read aloud:

“Guilty of assault with intent to kill, with extenuating circumstances, and a recommendation to mercy.”

The Judge immediately arose and sentenced the prisoner to two years in the jail at Jahú, which was the lightest sentence he dared give, in face of the verdict. The soldier led Horacio away again and locked him in the cell, after promising to bring his bundle from the hotel, and leave his horse with the man who had so often purchased the hides and skins which he had brought to Jahú in the old days.

How different now were his prospects from those which had opened themselves out before him, when, in the first flush of his new-born enthusiasm, he had resolved to give his young life and strength to the

spread of the Gospel among his own people! What had God in store for him here in this prison, when he had thought to please Him by giving himself to be a minister of the Gospel?

He glanced about him at the thick walls and ironed windows. Could such as these hold him back from freedom? Yet, that very morning, he had still been free to go on his way or on the way of duty, and he had freely chosen. Now, the rough and straightened way was his path!

The soldier came to the door and handed to him, through the little wicket, such things as he might have from his bundle—among them, a book. The sight of the Book brought to his mind a dim memory of something that he had read. Where was it? It was well at the beginning of the Book—of that he was sure—Adam? Noah? Abraham? Jacob? —no, it was none of these. Ah,—he has it now! “And Joseph’s master took him, and put him into the prison, a place where the king’s prisoners were bound, but the Lord was with Joseph.”

Yes, but Joseph was unjustly accused, and he—justly. Never mind,—he would appropriate the comfort that came to him, and so he read on and, when he had read it to himself, he told his companions of Joseph and his story, and, though they were interested in the tale, still they did not care for the moral of it.

The days went slowly by and Horacio whiled away the time by reading in the Book, and often he told his companions of the Gospel message and wonder-

ed why they did not receive it as he had received it; but they only made light of it, although they were glad enough to help pass the time by hearing the stories that were in the Book. Yet their manners did not change nor their own stories become less vile.

At last, one night, as he lay upon his cot, he was awakened by some slight noise that he heard and, sitting up in bed, became immediately aware that his companions were hard at work upon the bars of the window, cutting, cutting, cutting, slowly but surely, with some instrument they had made or procured in some way.

Suddenly the noise stopped: the workmen had seen the young man sitting up and watching them. Before he knew what was happening, he felt a blanket go over his head and his wrists were drawn down to the cot on either side. Half smothered, he struggled for a time and then lay still. Immediately his captors threw off the blanket, thinking that he had become unconscious. Finding that he was lying there with both eyes wide open, one of them thrust the end of a sheet into his mouth and crammed it tightly into place.

"Wilt thou join us and make thine escape, Senhor Protestante?" asked the leader.

Horacio shook his head.

"Thou wilt betray us, then?"

Their captive reflected for a moment and again shook his head. The men looked from one to another incredulously.

"A likely story!" muttered the leader. "Better

truss him and gag him!"

With that they tied him hand and foot to his cot with strips cut from a blanket and, gagging him carefully, returned to their work. In an hour or so the bars gave way and they all slipped through the aperture and disappeared in the darkness.

Horacio looked longingly at the open window and then commenced to turn and wriggle on his cot. Finally he succeeded in drawing a hand loose from his bonds, pulled the bandage from his face and withdrew the piece of sheet which had been stuffed into his mouth. In another moment he had his other wrist loose and, sitting up, unbound his ankles.

Gathering together his clothes and small possessions, he made them into a bundle and, vaulting lightly to the sill, dropped to the ground outside, and made off down the street.

Ah, sweet air of freedom! What a fool he had been to let them shut him up in that dreadful place! He would shake the dust of that ill-omened town from his feet and choose another way. Suddenly, he stopped short in the middle of the road. He was not yet out of the town, but the streets were empty of all save the watch, who were dozing on distant corners, and easily avoided because of their conspicuous white breeches.

There came a voice, speaking inside: "But Jonah rose up to flee unto Tarshish, from the presence of the Lord, and went down to Joppa," and the voice seemed to say again: "But Horacio rose up to flee from Jahú, from the presence of the Lord."

Turning upon his heels, he retraced his steps and came again to the jail. All was quiet within and it was evident that the escape of the prisoners had not yet been discovered, but the window was high above his head and he could not reach up to it.

"Now," thought he, "I must needs remain without, as I have no way of returning. I should look like a pretty fool to be found sitting here at the door in the morning."

Then he remembered that there was a pile of poles upon the roadside a bit back; so he returned and fetched one of the poles; set it against the jail, beside the window, and up this he climbed as he had once before climbed the cipó to be delivered from the queixadas. Then, having reached the sill again, he dropped upon the floor inside and lay down upon his couch to sleep until morning, when he was awakened by the hue and cry that was made over the escape of the prisoners.

As this was a somewhat common occurrence, no one greatly wondered, whereas all were exceedingly amazed that Horacio had not taken himself off, also. As for the young man, he had other things to think upon, for he presently discovered, upon getting himself in order, that the six hundred milreis that he had kept concealed in his clothing, had gone with the escaping prisoners.

Alas,—this was too much! How could God call him and then take away his liberty and his means? But to his mind there came these words: "Commit thy way unto the Lord: trust also in Him, and He

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shall bring it to pass."

The blacksmith came and repaired the window and the cell soon filled with other prisoners. The days went by and Horacio daily presented the Gospel message to his companions, without encouragement, but nevertheless he spoke as he was able, and studied the Word.

Three months had now passed away when, one day, the smiling face of Sor José appeared at the little wicket in the door, only to vanish again ere Horacio could spring to his feet. The door opened, and a soldier bade the young man get his things together and come outside. Hastily snatching up his belongings, and bidding farewell to his companions, Horacio left the cell where he had passed so many bitter hours, stepped out into the corridor, and was received in the warm embrace of his old friend.

"Ah, my son! God has been merciful. I knew it would come! I knew it would come!"

"What has come, Sor José?" asked the bewildered youth, looking at him enquiringly, as the old man still held him by the hand and beamed on him with his kind old eyes.

"Prepare to take leave of thy home and friends, lad," he said, with a droll twinkle in his eye, and rolling the words in his own peculiar fashion over his nearly toothless gums. "Prepare to tear thyself away! I grieve to cause thee this pain,"—chuckling at the thought—"but, in a word, the President of the State hath sent thee this bit of paper, by virtue of which thou mayest leave the place."



"How is that?" asked the amazed young fellow. "What does Campos Salles know of me?"

"I warrant he knows nothing, but here is his name on this paper, and that suffices," and he thrust into his hand a pardon on which was inscribed, "In consideration of meritorious services to the State." The old man laughed to see joy succeed astonishment.

"Tell me how it was," Horacio demanded, at length.

"Nothing more simple," replied his friend. "Thy colonel interested himself in thy case, when he had heard the whole story, and laid it before the President, with this result."

"Then my colonel has already returned to his fazenda at São Manoel?"

"Nay, he has not returned."

"Then how knew he of my troubles?"

The old man showed some confusion at this question, and Horacio, noticing it, felt a shadow of a suspicion flash across his mind.

"Didst thou seek my colonel in São Paulo?"

"Why not?" replied the old man, uneasily, but with ill-feigned indifference. "I had been wanting for a long time to run down to the City to see my folks there."

Horacio thought of the railroad fare and the old man's extreme poverty. What sacrifices had he not been obliged to make to enable him to make this journey? He put his hand into his pocket and immediately remembered his own condition.

"Knowest thou, old friend and benefactor," he said, anxiously, "that they have robbed me of my six hun-

dred milreis? I am clean—clean!” and he pulled a pocket wrong-side-out to make his statement more realistic.

Sor José shook his head slowly and sadly from side to side, then finally said, “Come! Bring thy bundle. Knowest thou not that there is a little band of believers in Jahú? No?”

“I did not mingle with such as they when I was here before,” replied Horacio, half laughing, “and did not even know there were such people.”

“Let us take thy case to the Rev. Ribeiro and ask counsel.”

Gathering his bundle under his arm, and bidding farewell to the kindly guards at the jail, Horacio accompanied the old man, to seek the house of the minister.

The little man stood in the doorway as he received them, and rubbed his hands and smiled and smiled. He had already heard Horacio’s story and welcomed him right cordially.

“Come in! Come in!” he called out, cheerfully, and rubbed his hands and smiled. Horacio felt like smiling, too, in spite of the loss of his money; and soon found himself wondering if sorrow could ever chase the smile from the little man’s face and bring tears instead.

“Please to sit down while I ask for the coffee! I am very glad to see you. This is my wife. Helena, this is our young friend who was in trouble about the priest. Helena, dear, wilt thou have the goodness to bring the coffee?”

The minister's wife stepped from the room to do his bidding, and the little man sat down, rubbing his hands and smiling.

"Dear, dear! Let us see! It will be well for you to leave Jahú to-day. It is hardly safe to risk the priest's forgetting his little grudge, and he has many friends. Yes, yes! It is wise to go by the Mixto and get to São Paulo to-morrow, and then we shall see what can be done. Sor José says you have money for your immediate needs?" and the little man rubbed his hands and smiled enquiringly at Horacio.

A shade crossed the young man's face. "The prisoners that escaped three months ago robbed me of it all. I am clean—clean!" and he smiled lugubriously.

The little man answered his smile with another which held a shade of gravity, and he rubbed his hands in perplexity as he murmured, "That is very bad. Very bad. So you have nothing? As for me, I had thought to strain a point for my own ticket and go with you, but the price of two is beyond me, I fear. As for José Capitão, I fancy he is as yourself." The old man nodded sadly in confirmation.

"There is my horse!" exclaimed Horacio, suddenly, as a memory of his old friend shot through his mind. "But, then, I cannot sell him. He is like a human being—old friend and comrade to me—and all that I have of home now," and a mist gathered before his eyes at the thought.

"No, no!" said the little man, rubbing his hands and smiling, "we must look about us. Let me see!

There is Senhor Baldomero, but his piety extends only as far as his purse strings, I fear. He is well fixed and has half a dozen houses which he lets; but then, he gives less than Donna Margarida, the dressmaker, although she has nothing. It would not do to ask him, for we should have our trouble for our pains. Our little church is poor. Alas, they have not yet learned to give! When they leave Rome, they think to themselves, 'There now, we are quit of the fees and the taxes and all the other impositions of the rascally priests!' They have not yet learned to express love by giving. Perhaps we are slow to ask them, also, for we fear to alienate them by going to them for money, when they should be the ones to come to us to offer, voluntarily, according as the Lord has blessed them.

"Then there is Senhor Joaquim—but his daughter lies ill this long time and he is not able, truly, though his will is good. Of the others, I know none save Senhor Thiago, and, as he has but recently joined us, I fear to ask him."

Horacio got up and reached for his hat.

"Wait! Wait!" cried the minister, hopefully, "the coffee is at the door. We shall find a way out of the difficulty, somehow."

The young man reached for the coffee and gulped it as he stood with his hat in his hand. "Wait for me here," he said, "I shall be back in a little moment," and vanished through the door.

Making his way down the street, he came at last to his old associate's place of business—the store of

the dealer who had received his skins, and who was now keeping his horse for him. Pushing his way through the group at the counter, he plucked Sor Francisco by the sleeve and drew him aside into his little office.

"What wilt thou give me, with Bonito as surety, for the sake of old times? If I redeem him not in two years, he is thine, and thou hast the use of him meanwhile in exchange for the use of thy money, which I need to get out of town."

Senhor Francisco looked hard at Horacio, for he did not recognize him at first: then he said: "Why didst thou not hide until dark and then we might talk at leisure? Now, thou wilt have the police at thy heels ere thou canst get away. The town is for Father João."

"What care I for the town? I have a pardon from the President! There is naught to fear by day. But I must get away, as thou knowest. Canst thou help me? I was stripped of what I had by those whom the jail window pardoned three months ago."

The trader pursed his lips and thought awhile. Finally, his features relaxed and he drew a roll of bills from his pocket. Laying three notes of fifty milreis upon the counter, he asked: "Is it a bargain?"

"I had thought to have more. The animal is none of the common."

"Yes, but old. Is it not so? Thou hast had him for six years and he was more than a colt then."

Horacio gathered up the money. "Say that I may redeem him at any time, and it is a bargain."

"Well, well! For old time's sake, let it go at that. Good luck to thee!" and the two gripped hands upon the compact. A moment more and Horacio was hurrying back to his friends.

Entering the house, he waved the notes before their wondering eyes, and bade them pack their valises. The little man smiled and rubbed his hands with satisfaction, but José Capitão shook his head and smiled the half-sad smile of disillusion, which comes with age.

"Thou wilt need more than that," he said, "to make a preacher. It is but one grain in the bin."

"Not so, Sor José," replied Horacio, cheerfully, "I shall repay thee what thou hast spent on my case already, and thou shalt ride with us to Brótas. Dost thou think to walk those twenty leagues on thine old legs, while my young ones ride?"

"Tut, boy! Though thou hast been a soldier, four legs carried thy two, but the old man has run up a distance-record which thou canst never equal. I shall take it easy and there are friends along the way who will be glad enough to entertain me. Besides that, I have books to sell! See here—the minister has arranged this full sack for me and it will be quite a business for me on the way, also there are words to speak in the Master's name. Fear not for me, but get thyself ready for to-night's train."

The little man smiled and nodded. "Let him be, Horacio!" he said, rubbing his hands briskly. "Let him be! Keep your money for books and clothing: you will need it all and more beside. As for me, I

am bound for Presbytery and have my ticket-money laid by, so it costs me nothing to take your matters in hand as well.

“But here is Helena, come to say that breakfast is served. Have the goodness to pass to the other room and share our humble fare. *Vamos todos!*” and the little man smiled them out to the hospitable, but frugal, midday meal.







6

THE STUDENT.



THAT afternoon they quietly slipped out of the town on the mixed train, leaving the old man with smiling, tear-stained face looking after them, with his kind old trembling hands crossed upon the knob of his old cane, ere he shuffled with his old feet along the platform and down the street, to fetch his pack and set off on his weary journey to his distant home.

As for his companions, the next day saw them disembarking from the train in the great Capital and making their way to the hospitable home of the Reverend Manoel Camargo, where a room was ready for Senhor Ribeiro. A hurried word of explanation ensued and Horacio was cordially welcomed and invited to share it with him.

Welcomed, indeed, he was before the words of ex-

planation and introduction, for such is the hospitable custom in Brazil, which has its inconveniences occasionally, as well as its conveniences, for, oftentimes, one may live in a family for a fortnight without being able to learn the names and relations of those who form the home circle.

That very day the two ministers and their charge went to call upon Dr. Street, the superintendent of the American Schools. They could hear the old man scolding about something which did not please him, as they entered.

"Unpropitious moment, Vicente?" whispered the Rev. Manoel, nudging his companion and looking at him enquiringly. Ere the other could answer with aught else than a smile and a gentle friction of the hands, the old man hurried them into his presence with a sharp query.

Looking up from a heap of disordered papers, Dr. Street frowned welcomingly at his visitors, and then half rose and extended a grudging hand. Horacio's hopes began to wane; nevertheless, he imitated his companions in accepting a chair in the crowded little office and the Rev. Manoel broke the silence with a nervous little "Well, Doctor,—we've brought you a new pupil for the superior course,—the upper school."

The Doctor frowned again, this time unmistakably: "More of your theological candidates with big bank accounts, I suppose," he answered, and finished with a grim smile.

The smile, such as it was, was some encouragement, and the little man smiled and rubbed his hands

in response, while the Rev. Manoel went on :

"It is too true that our boys are not rich, as a rule. I don't know why it is that rich boys don't want to preach the Gospel, although, now that I stop to think of it, I suppose it is that old question of the needle's eye, in another form."

"I suspect it is the same the world over," suggested the Doctor, cynically. "When you can't make a living in any other way, you can go to preaching as a last resort."

All this was striking Horacio as something of a revelation. He had given his all, when he was doing well in a small way, in order that he might be free to preach the Gospel.

"Well, what does this young man know?" went on the Doctor. "What preparation has he? How much can he pay each month? Who responds for his character?"

"We can easily respond for his character, Doctor," replied the Reverend Manoel. "As to what he knows, he is here and you can ask him. He is, I think, unable to pay anything, excepting to purchase the necessary outfit of clothes and books, but I am expecting that the Presbytery will make some arrangement to assist him to necessary clothing and books for the rest of the time, when they have heard his peculiar story."

The Doctor pressed the top of his bald head with the palm of his hand, all the fingers spread out, and snorted, "This is no charity school! We've got to have money or bust, I tell you! Here I am, rushed

to death and breaking down with overwork, and on top of that I must be sticking my own money into this thing year after year, with no returns. Never expect to see it again," he added, abruptly.

Then he gathered breath and went on: "You see these papers on my desk? I haven't got out my quarterly report yet, although it ought to have gone six weeks ago. I can't take a moment to talk with you now about any new pupils unless there is money in it. Money is what we want! The Board don't even send me the money they have collected in New York. There is that new building I had to put up this year and borrow money on my own name to do it. I told you the other day, Manoel, that this thing must stop. I can't receive another boy! What is it you want for him, anyhow? Board and lodging, books and clothes, tuition and cash advanced for dentist's bills and cigarettes? Only this and nothing more, eh?"

Horacio drew back his lips and showed his gleaming teeth for the Doctor to see—sound as when they were first set in his firm jaws—and spoke out rather sharply: "I don't smoke!"

"Humph!" grunted the Doctor. "So they all pretend." Then he turned again to the minister, while he rubbed his palm with renewed vigor on his bald pate.

"Do you think I am made of money? How do you suppose this school runs? Stuff a boy in one end, turn a crank, pull him out of the other, eh? All it costs is the crank!" Then he spread his hands

out, Israelitish fashion, palms up.

"I have no money, and I can't get any money! Why, there'll be a deficit of seventeen contos this semester, with all I can do. Where am I to get it? Where am I to get it, can you tell me? No! You can tell me how to spend it, but no one seems to bother about the other side. How many charity pupils do you suppose I have here now? You'd be astonished to hear. You would be astonished, I say, to hear!"

The ministers could answer nothing to this argument and reluctantly rose to go. Horacio's heart was submerged in a sea of hopelessness. His companions began their compliments for departure.

"How are you getting on at Jahú, Vicente?" the Doctor enquired. "How is that old skinflint, Baldomero—old rascal!? I remember how...." and here the Doctor launched himself into the relation of a long and spicy story which ended up with a tremendous laugh. His guests remained standing. The Doctor went on with his reminiscences until an hour had passed away and his guests had dropped back into their chairs, fascinated with the wonderful flow of anecdote, and totally unable to move to take their departure. Presently the old man directed himself amiably to Horacio and drew from him an outline of what he had learned in the army school.

"You will have to work hard and be tutored a little in order to keep up with your classes here," he said, at length, and Horacio's heart bounded. "The classes commence day after to-morrow. Take this card

and Sor Camargo will take you over to the dormitorio and introduce you to the house-master, who will assign you a place. Manoel, I depend upon you to see that Presbytery does all that is possible for him, for my burdens are very heavy. I don't know how long I can keep him, but we shall see."

The three petitioners saluted the Doctor and took their departure. "This way, Horacio," said the Reverend Camargo, turning abruptly to the left, and leading the way along a path which ran down between chicken-houses and garden, between sweet potatoes and strawberries, across a bit of meadow where two Jerseys and a donkey were grazing, and through a gate along the foot-ball ground, to the college buildings.

Mackenzie College, a massive, ugly, rectangular edifice, of dirty-pinkish pressed brick, stood on an eminence overlooking the splendid city, and, beyond the long streets of thickly-crowded houses, the valley of the Tieté sloped down from the Serra do Mar to the winding stream at the bottom. Jaraguá loomed up among the hills, and the visitors, ere they turned in at the door, caught a passing glimpse of its lofty crown through the thick branches of the bamboos which grew along the campus walls and overhung the street.

The upper floors of the building, fitted up as classrooms, were used temporarily for dormitories, and already a number of students were arranging their few possessions about the heads of their beds and upon the little tables that stood there.

In the office they found the house-master, busied with preparations for the opening of the term. He was a student of one of the upper classes who was working his way through college. The minister explained the purpose of their visit and presented Horacio and the card on which Dr. Street had scratched a few hasty words of instruction.

Following the house-master, they all ascended to the top-floor, where he designated an iron bed, a hay mattress and a small table and chair for the new student.

"Here is where I shall put you," he said, pointing to the bedstead and its concomitants. "You can send your box when you will. I shall be down-stairs and receive it. You will need a blanket: the college furnishes the rest. Bring towels, however, and anything else you may be likely to need."

They thanked him and took their departure, pausing a moment to catch a glimpse of the splendid view from the upper window, as they descended the stairs.

Returning to the city, Horacio made a few necessary purchases and, refusing the hospitable invitation of his new friend to stop at his home until the opening of school, returned to the College with his small bundle of effects, and found his purchases already there. A small box, or trunk, some clothing and bedding and a few small odds and ends made up the list. Thrusting his hand into his pocket, he drew out the remains of his capital and spread the dirty, ragged notes upon his knee, as he sat upon the edge of the bed.



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"Ten and ten are twenty and twenty are forty, and here I have six more and some nickels. Not very much to begin with! Well, a bad beginning may make a good ending. We shall see."

The bell rang for dinner and Horacio followed the sound to the refectory, which was situated at a short distance from the main building. Here half a dozen students gathered at one of the smaller tables with an American professor at one end and the house-master at the other. All remained standing until grace was said, when they took their seats. In a moment the soup went around and the conversation which had commenced, was lost in the sound of sucking from spoons.

All the students excepting Horacio were evidently either those who had remained during the holidays or those who had made an early return for some special reason, nevertheless they showed but little interest in the newcomer. A plain but plentiful dinner of roast beef, rice, beans and another vegetable, followed the soup, and black coffee was the only dessert. After dinner the boys gathered about Horacio and asked a few good-natured questions, with which his initiation was complete.

The day of the opening of school was always reserved for the setting of lessons and the designation of text-books. A group of professors stood about the office with books and papers in their hands and Dr. Street sat at his desk writing, answering questions, and giving instructions. The electric bells rang and the boys rushed to their class-rooms.

Horacio made his way to the First Year room and sat down at a vacant desk. Boys of all ages, from thirteen years to twenty-five, filled half the seats. No more than half the class was present, as punctuality is not a Brazilian virtue. In a few moments, a half dozen girls from the Girls' Building—in another part of the city—filed in with their chaperon and took their places.

Instantly every head was turned and a buzz of low-voiced comment ran around among the boys. "Oh, see Mathilde and Emilia!" "I never thought that Margarida would get up from below!" "Oh, what beautiful eyes Isabella has!" "What a beauty Clara is! Um! Um!" etc.

The girls were demure and seemingly oblivious, but the chaperon flushed and looked sharply at the boys, whereat there was a momentary lull in the hum of voices. The door opened with a bang and the Doctor thrust his head in and as quickly withdrew it. A hush had instantly fallen upon the class, but the hum began again when the door was shut. In another moment the door was reopened and the Doctor appeared with a strange professor, evidently a foreigner.

"Mr. Willcox, boys and—ah—young ladies," with a dry, quizzical smile toward the latter. "Mr. Willcox will have the classes in English. As he has but recently arrived and speaks no Portuguese, I shall explain for him what books you are expected to secure."

When he had finished, the Doctor withdrew and

conducted the new professor to another class-room, while the professors of French, Algebra, Portuguese, Latin, History, Drawing, Bookkeeping, etc., followed in rapid succession, with quick words of greeting and information. The Doctor then returned and dismissed the class, waiting while the girls filed out, and then throwing the door open for the boys.

Horacio had taken a careful note of what was required and, when he had secured his books from the house-master, found himself only the somewhat dismayed possessor of the nickels which he had so carefully counted after making his purchases in the city. That evening he went to the house of the minister in order to bid farewell to his friend from Jahú, who was returning to his home that day, after the session of Presbytery.

"Well, how goes it?" enquired the little man, cordially, rubbing his hands and smiling. Horacio smiled back, rather doubtfully, and thrust his hand into his pocket to draw forth the nickels which remained of his capital.

"Well, well! That is better than being in debt. Presbytery has voted you thirty milreis (about \$7.50) a month, on the condition that you spend your vacations in evangelization, of which work you will make a careful report to them."

The load was lifted from the student's heart. The amount was small but it would suffice. He thanked his friends warmly and, after a short visit with them, bade the little man farewell and returned to the school to have a dig at his books.

The days went swiftly by for the new student, and habits of study, systematic thought, and attention came to him gradually. With the other boys he became but slightly acquainted at first because for him there was no time for foot-ball—strange and fascinating game—nor for any other sports or recreation. Splendid health and iron nerves stood him in good stead, for he must needs distil from midnight oil the ointment for the axles of learning. He was ashamed to stand among the little boys, who thought him slow.

To no one did he speak of himself and his past life. The foot-ball captain would have sought him out had he suspected his strength and agility, but meekness and shabby clothes will bury a Grant or a Napoleon, and Horacio came and went, about his daily duties, and excited but little comment.

Once, indeed, the pet clown of the school marked him for a caipira, or hayseed, and tried to use him as a butt for jokes. Each day at lunch, Horacio found all the bananas of his table piled beside his plate. Bananas were bad at that season—hard and coarse—and none of the boys cared very much for them. The young man was puzzled at this objectless bit of horse-play—such as boys delight in—but, although he flushed a little at sight of the great heap of somewhat immature fruit, he said nothing and selected the ripest for his lunch, then broke his bread into his coffee and finished his meal.

Each day he chose his fruit from about a bushel that was piled about his plate. Each day the boys, with mock courtesy, collected and presented their

offerings. Only Horacio ate bananas for a week or so, and then they tired of their play and let him alone.

After study-hall, in the evenings, the students smoked in the dormitories, and, although the rules against it were strict, there were few exceptions to the law-breakers. Horacio did not smoke at all.

Some few days after the opening of school, four of the leaders were called before the Dean and reprimanded. They all denied the fact, but their denial was not believed. That night a council-of-war was held among the boys. Horacio was studying at his little table and gave no heed to the hum of voices. Presently a young man who was leader and spokesman of the dormitory—of the school, in fact, being a cousin of the President of Brazil—Cesario de Souza, touched him ceremoniously on the shoulder and beckoned him to the group.

Horacio laid down his books with a sigh and, running his fingers through his unkempt hair, approached the little conclave. De Souza struck an attitude, inflating his chest and thrusting the thumb of his left hand into the armhole of his vest, waved the other hand in what was fancied to be a gracefully impressive gesture.

“Colleague!” he began, “the honor of this dormitory has been ruthlessly outraged and trodden under foot. It is evident that we have a spy and telltale among us. Of all of us you are the only one who does not smoke and disobey the rules. Consequently — ahem!” — with another majestic sweep of the

hand—"you alone can be suspected of this base betrayal. What have you to say?"

"Nothing," replied the young man, simply.

"You confess your guilt?" cried the spokesman, amazed, for denial is expected in all cases, and they were planning to have a little mock-trial, with witnesses and learned counsel on each side.

"I did not say that," said Horacio, smiling calmly. "I was merely going to ask what concern it is of yours."

A general murmur of astonishment was heard from the boys. Their leader stammered out an explanation:

"Why, esprit de corps, nobility of sentiment, class pride should prevent such ignoble and ungentlemanly behavior."

"Muito bem! Muito bem! Apoiado!" came from all sides.

Horacio shrugged his shoulders as though he considered it entirely useless to carry on an argument where such sentiments received such cordial and unanimous approval, and turned to go back to his work.

"I have no time to give to such nonsense," he said, briefly.

A bomb could not have caused greater consternation. The President's cousin flushed with anger and sprang toward Horacio, pulling him around again by his sleeve. Horacio colored, but turned to meet him. De Souza was white with wrath, and stammered out:

"We are not through with you yet, Senhor Hayseed! As for myself, it matters nothing. My phys-

ician has told Dr. Street that I must be permitted to smoke, and I have his permission, but I speak for my fellows. We want no sneaks here !”

“What are you going to do about it ?” asked Horacio. He was very quiet, and his quietness deceived the boys.

“Do ? Do ?” stammered De Souza, for he had not thought about that. “You will find out soon enough. Sneak !”

“Look here !” said Horacio, who was tired of the affair and anxious to go back to his studying. “You fellows go at this thing your own way and no doubt it is a very good way, but if you want to call me ugly names, you will have to prove facts or eat words. See ? As for you, Senhor de Souza, I’ll let you off this time on condition you go slow in future.”

The young man turned his back contemptuously and started for his books. This coolness and contempt were too much for the student-athlete and leader. Reaching forward, he caught Horacio by the collar and pulled him backward, expecting to bring him ignominiously to the floor. To his surprise, Horacio’s body was stiff and resisting under his hand. Like a flash the country boy turned and caught his assailant by collar and handsome scarf, raising him from the floor and shaking him like a rat with both hands ; then, setting him down hard on a wooden chair, he said, without quickening a breath :

“You sit there and—think !” and then he laughed a good, frank, hearty, open laugh. “Now, fellows, I don’t like your smoking. It isn’t right and, if I were



asked, I should tell what you are doing, but I am no sneak and tattletale, and I tell you that once and for all. Nevertheless, I think I can tell you how the Doctor found out about the matter. Manoel, look behind your trunk! João, look behind yours! Pedro,—ah! you don't need to look. You know what is there. Why should anyone be accused of tale-bearing with all those cigarette stumps for the house-master to see?"

The boys looked at one another sheepishly, while De Souza sat still upon his chair and looked dazed.

Horacio turned his back for the third time, and soon lost himself in his books. The next day the foot-ball captain asked him to join the eleven but he declined.

Three months after the opening of school, Mr. Willcox, having learned a few sentences of Portuguese, was made house-master of the building. This was a grand lark for the boys. The new professor was a little man and very ladylike. He also suffered greatly from homesickness, and wept often when he went to call upon the American teachers down at the girls' school. His modesty hung out a never-failing, red flag at the slightest call.

One night Horacio was returning from his monthly call at the Minister's to receive his allowance from Presbytery. Entering the school building, all seemed strangely quiet below, but from above came a distant sound of dancing and laughter. The young man wondered that Mr. Willcox was not about, but slowly mounted the stairs on his way to his room. The

noise grew in volume as he ascended and, at last, only the dormitory doors stood between him and pandemonium. Slowly he turned the knob and entered. No one noticed his quiet appearance on the scene; so he paused for a moment and gazed upon a group which carried his memory back to the days when the bugres were his nearest neighbors.

There, in the center of the floor, stood little Mr. Willcox, suffused with blushes, while about him danced the inhabitants of all the dormitories, joining hand with hand, and boasting no other raiment than that which Nature had given them, chanting a dismal measure and prancing around in a circle. Horacio appreciated the situation at a glance and the suffering of the little house-master, and, at the same moment that he grasped the meaning of the performance, he also grasped a pitcher of cold water and, without a word of warning, threw the entire contents over the nude young scamps.

A howl of dismay arose and the circle broke and fled. At first they thought it was the Doctor who had come upon them, but, when they saw who it was, there was an attempt for a moment to contest the ground. Pulling a slat from one of the beds, Horacio herded them out of the dormitory, and, gathering up the night-clothes of those who belonged in his room, he flung them out after them into the hall, bidding them don them ere they attempted to return. A remembrance of the strength of his arm brought them discretion, and laughter took the place of anger as they hastily scrambled into their garments.

Poor Mr. Willcox, meanwhile, sat upon a chair with his head bowed upon the table, and, as Horacio could speak no English and he no Portuguese, he could find no way to comfort him.

A knock came at the door, in which Horacio had turned the key. He stepped forward and opened it, laughing as he saw the long string of night-robed boys waiting to enter. The boys laughed, too.

"Now, fellows," said the young man, persuasively, "Meestare Veelcox is very badly hurt. I think you ought to do the fair thing. Don't you think so? Here, Guilherme—come and interpret! You speak English. Meestare Veelcox!" he called, to the mortified and discomfited house-master.

Mr. Willcox lifted his head and Horacio beckoned. The little professor came toward him and Guilherme advanced shamefacedly from the group of students.

"Mr. Willcox," said the interpreter, "the boys want to say that they are sorry and hope that you won't say anything to the Doctor."

This last was a stroke of diplomacy, but the house-master's face immediately cleared and brightened.

"Oh, of course not," he said, eagerly, "unless he asks me about it, for he may hear of it in some other way. But I do hope you boys will be a little more orderly! I cannot talk to you in your language or it would be easier for all of us."

Guilherme interpreted and, one by one, the boys stepped up and shook hands, mumbling sheepishly all sorts of apologies, which only Horacio's presence kept from being ridiculous in their tenor, for the stu-

dents would often take advantage of a teacher's lack of knowledge of the language to solemnly get off all sorts of absurdities or even obscenities, in order to divert their comrades; all of which the teacher must perforce accept as proper replies until familiar with all the intricate, idiomatic turns and twists of the language.

This ceremony finished, Mr. Willcox went down the stairs to his own room and Horacio turned to his studies.

Six months of school life soon passed away and, by dint of the hardest labor and the most earnest application, the young student made up the studies in which he stood behind his class, and made such further progress, with the aid of Mr. Willcox, who laid out for him special reading and gave him night-classes, that, at the beginning of the second semester, he was able to take his place among the students of the Second Year. Mathematics had been his *bête noir*. History, Latin and French were play for him, as they are for all Brazilian boys, and in the English, his new friend had given him a substantial lift.

Life had now become less of a continual drudgery to him and he was able to give time to foot-ball and also to aid the Reverend Manoel's church. With the beginning of the new semester, he took up the study of physics and chemistry with his class. Their professor in these branches was a much-bedoctored, but very eccentric, American, well liked and equally well tormented by the boys. Horacio found it almost impossible to contain himself at sight of the daily af-

fronts offered him by the young scamps.

"Manoel!" the teacher would say, "what is the principle of the air-pump?"

"Manoel!" all the students would demand, in concert, and imitating the peculiar Portuguese of their instructor, "what is the principle of the air-pump?"

"Boys! I do not need your assistance," objects Mr. Franklin.

"Boys! He does not need our assistance," cries the class, in unison. "Everybody be silent!" With looks of ludicrously exaggerated reproof each boy gazes innocently about him at his comrades.

Silence for a moment and the teacher tries to go on. "Manoel, what is the principle of the air-pump?"

"The principle of the air-pump is...." choruses the class, in a disorderly clamor.

"Manoel! Manoel, I said," interposes Mr. Franklin, nervously.

"Manoel, he said! Manoel! Only Manoel!" comes from all sides, and then a great wad of filter-paper sails over the heads of the class and alights upon the teacher's desk, just missing his nose in its descent. Boys leave their places and walk about the room on a pretence of making sundry experiments, and bang the apparatus noisily on the tables.

Horacio did what serious work he could, but felt that his progress in these studies was slow.

Mr. Franklin, whose specialty was Botany, had planted an experimental garden with rows of seeds of various sorts, in a patch of ground which the Doctor had ceded to him for the purpose.

One day Horacio passed that way and noticed the long rows of little sticks with names of the various plants. Others had noticed it also, and planned to assist Nature in giving the Botanist a fine crop. That night a deputation of boys skirmished about the dormitories with a big basket, and then visited the other dormitory where the ninety small boys of the lower school lived.

The next morning, as Horacio went to take his coffee in the refectory, a strange sight met his eyes. On the little botanical sticks were perched hundreds of old shoes with their toes all pointing in the same direction, each little stick being provided with its own individual shoe. A group of boys, convulsed with laughter, gathered about the wonderful garden.

"Hush, boys! Here comes Meestare Frankleen," cried one, as the fat little professor came waddling along toward the refectory. The group became silent for a moment, but, as Mr. Franklin approached, one of them, who was a little more audacious than the rest, sidled forward and greeted him.

"Oh, Meestare Frankleen," he enquired, innocently, "what strange plants are these which you have set out here?"

The Professor of Botany, and many other things, gazed in astonishment at the strange freak of Nature; then, as the truth burst upon him, a feeble grin flickered about his mouth and he shambled away in haste to get his coffee, leaving the crop to be garnered by the janitor.

Thus the year ran on and Horacio made steady

progress. When the summer vacation began, in December, with the consent of the Minister; he accepted employment in the City, and gave all his spare time to study and mission work. We cannot follow him through his school life but must look forward to the end of his second year, when, on taking his examinations, he received the diploma which would enable him to enter the Seminary and begin his theological course.







7

THE COLPORTEUR.



ORACIO was hoping to be able to take the three years at the Seminary in two, by working hard, day and night, as he had done throughout his preparatory, and, light of heart, he said good-by to his comrades and started upon a long trip into the interior to sell Bibles and other good books, and do such humble preaching of the Gospel as he might be able.

Riding second-class on the train as far as São Manoel, he found his faithful Bonito, who had been loaned him for the journey by Sor Francisco and had been sent to São Manoel in response to a letter from the young man. Signs of age had begun to manifest themselves in the sturdy beast, but, to Horacio's joy, he gave every evidence of recognizing his old master, and whinnied and caressed the young man as he

flung his arms about his neck.

The next bay Horacio set out upon his journey, with saddle-bags well stuffed with books, and turned Bonito's head once more toward the sertão. At every ranch and house along the way, the colporteur paused to display his wares. The books, furnished by the Bible Society at much less than cost, were very attractive, in leather and gold and metal-clasps; and the young man's ancient experience as a merchant came in play again to gain him a hearing and a sale for his books.

As night fell, he found himself following between interminable barbed-wire fences, with endless coffee on either hand, and at last came to the fazenda-house of some rich proprietor. Although he would have preferred an humbler dwelling, there seemed to be no choice, and so he turned his horse's head toward the house and rode up the long avenue, between beds of flowers, fountains and long rows of orange trees laden with their golden fruit and fragrant blossoms.

An almost palatial mansion met his eyes at last, and, as he approached the building and clapped his hands to attract attention, the bookkeeper came from his office on the lower floor and enquired what he would have.

The young man explained that he was traveling and selling books and, as night had overtaken him, would like to have a bed and food for himself and feed for his horse.

The bookkeeper courteously bade him dismount

and he would call the Manager, who, upon hearing what the stranger had to say, ascended to the principal floor and consulted with the owner, an elderly Brazilian lady who was reputed to be the wealthiest person in the whole country.

Horacio already knew her palatial home in São Paulo by sight and was somewhat taken aback at thought of thus thrusting himself upon her hospitality; but the Manager came down in a moment and bade him enter, while he called a servant to take his horse to the stable.

The old lady greeted him pleasantly upon the upper veranda and sent a servant with him to a small room at the back of the house, bidding him haste, as dinner was about to be served.

Horacio made his way somewhat awkwardly across the gleaming, marble floors and, after a wash, in which part of the red dust came off in the soap-and-water and a more than equal amount on the handsome towels, came forth to seat himself at the great table, covered with fine linen, porcelain and glittering silver.

A number of guests sat at the table and also the Manager and his daughter, which latter acted as the personal attendant of the old lady. The blazing gas-lights, numerous well-trained servants gliding noiselessly about, and the play of badinage and repartee, all combined to cause the young man to shrink into himself. His hostess raised her tortoise-shell lorgnette to discover if he were well served. Horacio winced and almost dodged.

"You have no wine, young man! Maria,—fill his glass!"

"Thank you, but I do not take it," replied Horacio, nervously.

"Ah! Perhaps you will have beer? Maria, open a bottle and set it there!"

"Thank you! I do not take anything save water," protested the young man, much embarrassed.

"Here is sweet wine," insisted his hostess, with a look of ill-concealed astonishment. "I do not know what it is—Oporto or Madeira. Maria, set the decanter near him!"

The terrible lorgnette turned away before Horacio could stammer out a word of refusal and he had to let the glass which the servant had filled, stand by his plate untouched. He was too timid to ask for water now, although very thirsty from his hot and dusty ride.

His hostess had lowered her lorgnette and joined in the conversation with a bit of spicy gossip. A ripple of laughter greeted the old lady's sally. Horacio had heard such stories, in grosser language, at the camp-fire and in the barracks.

The plates were deftly removed as soon as emptied, or even whenever the knives and forks were accidentally laid side-by-side upon them for a moment. Each time that a fresh plate, knife and fork were set before him, he perceived with a little start of surprise that the meal was not finished, as he had supposed. He also noticed for the first time that the guests here did not put their knives in their mouths.

In the school this had not been brought to his attention, although he had learned the use of a napkin there.

From time to time the old lady paused in her conversation and directed her lorgnette at his plate, plunging him into momentary panic. At last the dessert came upon the table. Horacio was fond of "doce" and quickly emptied his plate. Again the terrible lorgnette!

"Will you not have more?" she asked.

"Obliged!" replied Horacio, hesitatingly.

"Obliged, yes, or obliged, no?" queried Donna Virginia. "Ah, you say nothing! Then it is obliged, yes—is it not? Carlos, pass his plate to me!" Horacio smiled and made no resistance.

Shallow glasses with long stems stood near each plate and the colporteur had been wondering what could be their object. A yellow liquid was now poured into them and, as it bubbled and sparkled, all of them raised their glasses and saluted one another about the table, sipping from their glasses and clinking them together before putting them to their lips. This was a novelty, and cold beads of perspiration stood out on the young man's brow as he noticed that the eyes of all were fixed upon him.

Again the glasses were raised and the salutations ran around. A gentleman waved his glass toward Horacio, muttered a polite phrase, and waited. All eyes were now again turned toward the colporteur, in amused expectancy.

"Do you not accept?" asked the gentleman, of

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Horacio.

The young man seized a glass of water that stood at his neighbor's place, so hurriedly that some of it spilled and ran down his chin. The younger members of the family snickered audibly and their elders could not altogether restrain their amusement, but, thereafter, they let him alone. Presently the old lady asked him whither he would be going.

"I am on my way to the sertão," he replied, "and in two days I hope to be in the forest. I am selling books."

"Books! What kind of books? Will you show them to us after dinner? Perhaps we may buy some."

"With pleasure," answered the colporteur, "but they are Protestant books. I have many nice Bibles. It is the translation of Padre Figueiredo, approved by the Queen of Portugal and the Archbishop of Lisbon."

"Ah!" said Donna Virginia, smiling, "we entertain everybody here. One day it is a priest and the next it is a heretic. I am glad to see that your hands are clean, young man! The priests do not always have clean hands. Oh, I do wish our padres would keep themselves clean!"

"Mother!" exclaimed a matronly daughter, deprecatingly.

"No, no—don't 'mother' me! It does seem to me that priests ought to be clean though all the world beside be soiled. There was Padre Antonio, who stopped here the other day. His hands were dreadful, and his linen—oh, it was a sight! I do assure

you. He ate with his knife and murdered his Portuguese.

"No, I don't like that kind of priests any better than I like heretics—begging your pardon, young man!—for I presume you are a heretic if you sell Protestant books. What do heretics believe, anyway? I have always had a great curiosity to know."

Horacio flushed at finding himself the center of attention again, but answered valiantly: "We believe in the Bible. We believe that all men are sinners and can by no possibility enter heaven through their own virtues, nor by any other means save the death of Jesus Christ. We believe that He died that we, by repentance and belief, might be saved. That is all. We do not believe in the traditions of the Church of Rome, nor in the worship of the Saints and the Virgin."

"Santa Maria! He has his creed on his tongue's end," laughed Donna Virginia, "and yet it is not bad—what he says. I do not know why the priests should make such a fuss about it...."

"Mamae!" interrupted a young granddaughter, appealing to the matronly lady who had tried to restrain Donna Virginia a moment before,—*"mamae! Eponina wanted to get married to Joãozinho to-day."*

"What!" exclaimed several, in chorus, "she is only eleven, and he can't be more than fourteen."

"That is what Padre Joaquim said," continued the little miss, demurely. "He opened her dress at the neck and told her to go home and wait a year."

"Cruz e credo! There—that will do! You are



too young to be concerned about such matters," exclaimed her mother, with embarrassment.

"I saw something funny the other day," interposed one of the gentlemen, hastily, to create a diversion. "I was going up to São Raphael and we had to stop for a couple of hours at Cordeiros for the other train. There was a group of Italians hanging about a house that was being built, across the way. Presently we heard a great fussing and chattering over there and so we all went across to investigate.

"We found a fellow stamping around, wringing his hands and weeping—yes, crying like a great child, kicking the loose bricks and mortar with his toe, and staring at the ground."

"What was the matter? Was he crazy?" asked one of the ladies, as he paused for an instant.

"Crazy! Not much!—as you will see. I asked what the trouble was. It seems that the fellow had always kept a twenty-franc gold-piece to remind himself of home, and, somehow or other, he had lost it in the rubbish.

"'Oh, San Genaro!' he was wailing. 'Oh, San Genaro! Giva me ma twenty liri back again!' and all the time he was kicking the bricks and mortar around and wringing his hands. Presently he stopped and put his hands together like a child in prayer, and said, 'Oh, San Genaro, giva me ma vinti liri and I giva thee one for thine altar. Coma now—good Saint!—seeka the gold for me!'

"He looked about on the ground but did not find the money. Then he tore his hair and wept some

more, but, by-and-by, he stopped and prayed again: 'Oh, coma now, San Genaro, seeka me ma leetle pieça monnee—ma one leetle pieça monnee! I giva due liri!' Again he looked on the ground, with the same success as before, and so he went on, wheedling the Saint and gradually increasing his bids until he had promised the whole piece for its restoration."

"Que engraçado! And he found it then, of course?" queried Donna Virginia, incredulously.

"You may laugh all you want, tia mine," replied the young man, with a smile, "but the actual fact is that the poor fellow had no sooner promised the entire gold-piece than he kicked it out of the ground, where he had been trampling it all the while."

"I don't see why not," murmured one of the young ladies, "he was probably sincere in appealing to the Saint."

"Wait until you hear the rest, cousin," laughed the narrator. "Well, then; when he got the coin between his thumb and forefinger, you ought to have seen the play of emotions on his face! First, I think it was incredulity mingled with awe, which slowly faded into a sly leer of cupidity and craft. 'Ah, ha!' he cried, addressing the Saint, 'San Genaro,—you old rogue! So you thoughta to put up a jobba on me! Corpo di Baccho! You coma getta the monnee! I giva to you when you coma getta. Addio!' and the sly rascal thrust the coin into his pocket and made off down the road as if he expected the Saint to take after him."

A roar of laughter went up from the table, but

Horacio noticed that the young ladies looked frightened.

"What happened to the man then?" suddenly asked the young lady who had spoken before and whose interest had been intense, turning an eager, naive face toward her cousin. A second shout of laughter greeted her query, and, in great confusion, she retired behind the epergne and a deep blush. Her mother came to her rescue.

"There, never mind, Paulina! They ought not to laugh. 'Tis only a case of 'beads in the hand and the devil in the heart'. Why, only the other day I heard of a similar case. Donna Ernestina Franco lost her comb and prayed to the Saint to find it, and, shortly afterward, she found it just where she had looked a moment before. Well! She laughed and said, 'Pooh! If I'd looked sharper the first time, I should have found it.' The very next day she lost it again and—never—found—it!"

"Cruz e credo!" exclaimed Donna Paulina, jumping up a wee bit in her seat and provoking another laugh at her expense.

"Speaking of Donna Ernestina, it seems that both of her children are going to be deaf mutes," said the Manager, joining in the conversation.

"That's what comes of marrying cousins!" exclaimed one of the gentlemen. "That is one thing I never will do! We Brazilians ought to be getting civilized enough by this time to know better."

"Oh, nonsense, Francisco! You know you would marry a cousin any time if it kept the property to-

gether. Why, I married my own uncle when I was only thirteen and you children are bright enough—too sharp for me, sometimes!”

“Yes, there are exceptions, of course, but look at old Tótuco, over at Lageado—he has five children and they are all deaf mutes. He married his cousin. I was talking about it with him the other day and it seemed to amuse him. He commenced philosophizing about it. ‘There is my neighbor, Sor Reynaldo,’ he said, ‘he married his cousin about the same time I married mine. He has five children, also, and they are all idiots—te, he!—while mine are all smart as a whip.’ He seemed to think it a good joke—the old rascal! Do you know, he is as rich as Crœsus and he won’t send one of them to a school for the deaf and dumb but has already married one of the girls to a good-for-nothing fellow who lives over there. The old man ought to be ashamed of himself! He has ninety thousand acres in the home-ranch, not to mention a couple of other ranches he has, over on the Rio Negro.”

Coffee having been served, a company of musicians, selected from the Italian laborers on the great plantation, struck up a schottische, in the music-room beneath. The company adjourned to the large sitting-room and Donna Virginia bade Horacio show them his books.

A servant went to fetch the saddle-bags, and, in the hush between two pieces of music from the band, a sound of distant singing came from the direction of the village, or colony.

The young people rushed to the door, and all went out upon the veranda to see what was going on.

Far off across the lake, a long train of flickering candles bobbed in a wavering line down the village street, to the accompaniment of a weird and mystic chant, which rose and fell in charming harmony, to which the distance lent a most enchanting effect.

For a moment the procession paused at the chapel, then turned toward the house and came down upon the long causeway, across which the little points of light fluttered ever nearer and nearer.

Donna Virginia called the Manager, as soon as she saw that the procession was turning toward them, and bade him illuminate the front of the building. In a few moments the brilliant acetylene gas-lights flared out at numerous points over the doors and at the angles of the mansion, and slowly the procession swayed toward them across the long causeway. The young ladies were in an ecstasy of delight, and to the most indifferent there could not fail to be a certain charm. At the great black cross in the garden it paused again and, by the wavering candle-light, Horacio read the white letters upon it, "O crux, ave spes unica nostra."

The weird chant came ever nearer and nearer and now the persons gathered upon the veranda could make out the litter with the image of the Virgin, borne upon the shoulders of four maidens at the head of the procession. Upon arriving in front of the house they paused again and finished their song—then all cried, together: "Viva Donna Virginia!" and

passed on again, along the driveway toward the village.

The band now played another selection and Horacio spread his books upon the table while all gathered around to see them.

"Is this the Bible?" queried Donna Paulina, touching a handsome volume gingerly with the tip of her dainty finger.

"Yes, that is the complete Bible," replied the colporteur, holding it out toward her. The young lady drew her hands behind her and shuddered slightly, turning away. Some of the others, however, turned its leaves with ill-constrained curiosity.

"What is this copy worth?" asked Donna Virginia, lifting a large Bible, in limp morocco, which she had been examining.

"It is worth a fortune, senhora, but I sell it for four milreis."

"Four milreis!" cried the lady, in astonishment, "you cannot mean this one. Why, that is giving it away!"

"The Gospel ought to be free, senhora," replied Horacio. "These books are sold at less than cost to the publisher in order that all may have the privilege of buying and reading."

"I shall take this one," she said, smiling, for she was not too rich to be pleased at the thought of getting a bargain—then adding, as if in excuse for her action,—"I want to tease Padre Joaquim a bit."

One of the gentlemen purchased one also, and then Horacio put his books away.

The next morning he continued his journey, after a delightfully cold shower-bath. He was too much of a Brazilian not to know better than to offer any compensation other than his most cordial thanks for the hospitable entertainment which he had received, and Donna Virginia gave him a hearty shake of the hand and hospitably bade him visit her again, whenever he might pass that way.

At about eleven o'clock he ate his breakfast at the humbler dwelling of a small farmer, where he had paused to sell some books, and there he urged the acceptance of remuneration for the meal, but the kindly caboclo would not accept a vintem. That night he approached an extensive and well-kept fazenda and rode up to the door to ask hospitality. A large, dark-featured man came to the door, in response to the clapping of his hands, and bade him dismount and enter, before he would even listen to what he had to say.

Horacio finally managed to make his wants known and the man shook him cordially by the hand.

"Come in! Come in!" he cried, heartily, drawing him toward the door. "Never mind about your horse! João! Come here and get the gentleman's horse! I suspect you are one of those fellows from São Paulo—from the American School. The old man is here to-night but that don't make no difference. He won't care. He likes to have a chat with anyone that will talk with him, and we have plenty of room for you in the house."

"The old man?" said Horacio, interrogatively.



"Why, yes, his Reverence, to be sure. Didn't you know that this place belonged to Padre Malachias, Canon of the See? You know the Church of the See—there, in the Largo da Sé, in São Paulo? Haven't you ever seen the old man there, in the City?"

"Yes, yes, of course. I remember now, but I was not expecting to find him way up here, in the edge of the sertão."

"Well, here he is! This fazenda is his by inheritance. He didn't get it out of the poor,—jolly old beggar! He'll never get much that way. His living costs him a pretty penny all the time, and if it were not for this fazenda he would not be Canon of the See. I'd hate to know what it cost him in the first place—from old Peter's successor. No, I don't want to know—it would make me feel too bad, but if the old chap sticks to it, and the price of coffee stays up, he may come to be a bishop by the time his tonsure has spread all over his noddle and his back is bent double.

"But come inside! Here I am, keeping you standing all this time, talking your head off; but then, you see, there are not many come this way and I am as bad as his Reverence to enjoy a crack with them."

Hardly understanding the cordiality of his welcome, Horacio followed the man, whom he rightly assumed to be the Administrator—or Manager—of the fazenda, into an inner room, where he pointed out to him a small iron bed and toilet articles, and bade him make himself at home, as dinner would soon be ready.

At the table he was presented to the priest, a jov-

ial-looking old man, portly and blear-eyed, somewhat broken with age, but full of life and interest in the things of life. The Administrator's wife and three young girls, his daughters, made up the number of those who took their seats at the table, and Horacio seemed to see something familiar in the faces of all—something which he was entirely unable to explain.

"You c-c-come from São P-p-paulo, young man?" mumbled Father Malachias, with a half stutter, peculiar to him.

"Yes, Senhor Padre," replied Horacio, dreading the next question; for he was not at all sure that even the sacred privileges of hospitality were sufficient to assure him of respect, were his business to be known.

"Y-y-you mushed-mushed-must have seen me there some t-t-time, young man, b-b-but-but I d-d-don't remember you," went on the old gentleman.

"I remember you very well, Senhor Padre. I used to belong to the Batahão de Nossa Senhora do Carmo, in barracks at São Paulo for two years, and I have seen you many times in the Church of the See. I have also seen you many times on the street but, of course, you would not remember me," and Horacio laughed at the thought of it.

"No, no. Just so,—but my m-m-memory is pretty good, isn't it, Zacharias?"

"Splendid!" assented the Administrator, laughing, "but I'll wager you ten milreis, Senhor Padre, that you can't remember a thing that you never knew."

The old man chuckled. "I c-c-can remember a whole lot of th-th-things that you n-n-never knew I

knew, at any rate," and he looked sharply at his employé, who blushed without exactly knowing why.

"M-malachias and Zacharias! Zacharias and M-malachias! It's easy enough to m-make p-p-poetry out in the roça. I always had a t-t-turn for the arts,—Zacharias, you knew that?"

"Yes, your Reverence, to be sure! Your Reverence could paint a portrait of yourself so realistic that all the women-folks about the house were continually dropping down upon their knees to get its blessing."

The priest looked hard at his old retainer to see if he might detect the least sign of insincerity in his face, but Zacharias was as solemn as a tombstone.

"Where is that p-picture I p-painted when I was a lad, Zacharias? It used to hang in the sala."

"It is there now, Senhor Padre,—you can see it after dinner."

"Young man," resumed the priest, after mumbling his food in silence for a few moments, "are you an engineer?" and then, without waiting for a reply, he went on, "because I have a very important coal mine here, on the fazenda. I discovered it myself."

"I am afraid, Senhor Padre, that you must be mistaken about the mine," interrupted Sor Zacharias, "I have hunted everywhere, since you were here the last time, and I can't find a trace of it."

"Mif-mif-mistaken, am I?" said the old man, testily. "Lots you know about it! You always want to make an issue with me on scientific questions—you, who are a person of no education whatever."

"That is true, Senhor Padre, but this time I think you are mistaken."

"Of course! Just so! That is the way every time. There was that hole I had you dig—as you very well know—where the kerosene ran in on the water that gathered. Legitimate kerosene, young man," he continued, turning to Horacio as if in disgust and impatience at Zacharias' incredulity. "Pure and legitimate kerosene, young man! You are an engineer, you said?—no?—oh, you are not an engineer, well, my nephew is an engineer,—graduated at the Polytechnic at Rio—and he says that wherever there is kerosene, there you are sure to find coal. So, I have a very important coal-mine, somewhere on the property."

The Administrator grunted, dubiously, and then made haste to press upon the priest a favorite sweet, as the old man turned on him angrily. Padre Malachias took the "doce", but resumed the argument with an immediate demand to know why his statement should be doubted.

"Well, for just this reason, Senhor Padre,—there was one of those fellows here the other day that belong to the State Bureau of what-do-you-call-'ems—Jellogists?—Jollogists, eh?"

"Geologists?" suggested Horacio.

"Yes, that's it!—jollogists. Well, he said that the kerosene had nothing to do with the coal: that idea is all played out. So I took him down to the hole there behind the house and showed him that shiny scum on the water, and he said it was nothing but

iron-rust and that I could find it anywhere in this State. Sure enough, I've been looking out for it ever since and I see it everywhere. I wouldn't give that for your old coal-mine," and he snapped his fingers contemptuously.

Father Malachias choked to get out what he had to say in reply, but finally gave it up and accepted a cup of coffee. "I've g-g-got a m-m-marble mine, anyway," he muttered sulkily to himself, as the coffee ran down his trembling chin. "I know I have a m-m-marble mine, for this hill b-b-back here on my p-p-place b-belongs to the same system of hills as...."

"Stick to coffee, Father Malachias! Stick to coffee!" cried Sor Zacharias, cheerfully, "the crop is extra good this year."

The old man was easily led to drop the subject of his mines and take up that of his beloved coffee-trees, and to this he stuck until they left the room and went to the sala.

Here the old man was again reminded of his work of art and took up a position before the huge oil-painting of himself as a young man, which he had made before a mirror when he was in the flush of his early vigor. Cocking his head languishingly on one side and maintaining his heavy paunch in his clasped hands, he gazed idolatrously at the portrait.

"I was a fine-looking young m-m-man, Zacharias," he said, pensively, "a fine-looking young m-m-man in every respect. You remember me, Zacharias, how I was then?"

"Remember you, your Reverence! How old were

you then?" responded the Administrator, with a mischievous grin.

"Let me see. I was thirty, Zacharias, and a fine-looking young fellow. You remember me?"

"How old are you now, Senhor Padre?" enquired the younger man, without replying directly to the priest's question.

"How old am I n-n-now? Well, I'm seventy-five—seventy-five years old!"

"Well, I'm forty, Senhor Padre, so that picture was painted five years before I was born and I can't remember exactly how you looked at that time. Did your Reverence have a bad toothache when it was painted or what is it that makes that lopsided bulge on the jaw there? and one eye is looking one way and the other is busy about something else. They must have fed you badly too, for it looks as ghastly as a corpse. No, I can't say that I think you were very good-looking. I suspect that is where your Reverence got your reputation for sanctity."

The old man smiled an indulgent smile and dropped into an easy chair. "Where is your b-b-boy, Zacharias? Is he at school still in the same place?"

"Yes, your Reverence, he is still at the American School, in the City."

"The American School!" exclaimed Horacio, in great surprise, "then I must know him. What is his name?"

"His name is Alvaro Silveiras. He is in the upper course."

"Oh, then, I know him very well. He is a splen-

did fellow."

The Administrator's face beamed with pleasure but he answered, modestly, "We think a heap of him here. So you are from the School, also? How is the boy?"

"He is well...." Horacio replied, but Father Malachias interrupted him: "It b-b-beats me how these P-p-protestants can t-teach a boy how to g-g-get ahead in the world! There is no use a t-t-talking! Ave Maria! I wish our p-p-people could get onto their t-tricks. But you d-d-don't send your girl to to them? The heretics have not g-g-got a hold on you, my d-d-dear?" and he turned to the eldest girl, who sat silently in a corner of the room. She laughed and shook her head.

"No, no!" her father answered, for her, "it's a bargain between the wife and me: she goes to the Sacred Heart, but the boys have to know something, so they go to the American School, or at least Alvaro goes now and the other will when he is big enough."

"And what are you d-d-doing so far from São P-p-paulo, young m-man?" asked the priest, and Horacio decided to answer frankly and take the consequences, so he spoke out boldly, "I am selling Bibles and other good books, during my vacation."

The old man laughed. "Humph!" he said, "I wonder what the B-b-bishop would say, d-did he know I was entertaining B-b-bible-sellers? Well, I suppose it is a b-business like any other, and, after all, I don't know what harm the b-b-book ever d-d-did except to set some of us p-priests by the ears. Alice, can't



you g-g-give us a little m-m-music or haven't the Sisters d-d-done their d-duty by you?"

"Come, Alice, jerk your repertory," said her father, to forestall any bashfulness, dragging the stool to the piano and pulling down her music for her. "She isn't half bad," he explained, proudly, "when she knows a thing, but when you catch her on something she hasn't learned, there's more different kinds of snarled-up noise in a minute than you could unravel in a week."

Horacio had heaved a long sigh of relief at the easy way in which the old priest took the knowledge of his occupation, and now he leaned back comfortably in his chair and enjoyed the really excellent music which the young girl furnished.

The next morning he took leave of them all with cordial expressions of good-will on both sides.





8

ALFREDO.



OLD ED neatly in the inside pocket of his coat was Horacio's first sermon! Whatever prejudices the other boys might have against written addresses, he was determined to confine himself to notes until he could learn to confine himself to his subject and not go wandering off into a maze of meaningless words. In an informal talk it seemed to him that it might be well for a lad to speak without them, but, in a more pretentious address, he did not as yet feel like deserting them.

His first sermon was to be preached at a little chapel at Bella Vista, whither he had been sent with a letter to an elder who dwelt hard by. This little congregation was the most numerous and important of all the little groups of believers in the edge of the great sertão. The minister at Lenções had a general

oversight of the church, which comprised some forty members, and, at rare intervals, he filled the pulpit on his itinerations through the wilderness. At other times he managed occasionally to send someone to give them the Word, but the chief portion of the time they must needs shift for themselves and make the neighborhood prayer-meeting take the place of a regular service.

The bricks of the little chapel had been moulded and burnt, and the building itself had been erected by the church members' own hands, and it was located near the center of a little glade in the forest. Only the house of a small farmer who acted as caretaker, or sexton, stood near by, the remaining members of the congregation being scattered upon small holdings lying near and far in every direction.

Horacio bore a letter from the Pastor to the Resident Elder, as has been said, and, on Saturday afternoon, found himself approaching the place. The road led up and down across creeks and over ridges and finally through a heavy bit of timber to the colony of Sor João Ribeiro.

This group of ramshackle, tumble-down, thatched houses, piled together without regard for the road that ran through it, with wallowing and squealing pigs and fluttering hens in animated confusion, was the outlier of civilization. Beyond the little colony, the whole valley showed signs of cultivation, although it was easily to be seen that everything was new.

There was a lack of finish to the fields and to the stumps and trunks which plentifully bestrewed them :

there was a lack of finish to the coffee trees that grew among the corn : a lack of finish to the houses, to the fences and even to the pig-pens and the pigs themselves : a lack of finish to the road, where the snubby trunks and roots still protruded and tripped the horses or jolted the carts : in short, worthy Sor João Ribeiro was "forming" his fazenda and, hence, money was short although food might be abundant, and anything in the way of luxury or style must wait for better times.

Down across a bit of meadow, the tiled roof of a very unpretentious plantation-house showed itself against the dark-green of the creek-bottom. Near by, the thud, thud, thud, at intervals, of an industrious monjolo alternated the splash of its emptying water. A little farther on, down by the creekside, a combined saw and grist-mill showed the enterprise of the owner, and, far beyond, against the uprising, dark line of the forest, a wee bit of a building, scarce seen in the distance, would, upon closer inspection, prove to be the district-school ; which, also, owed its life to the public spirit of Sor João, who was a member of the distant Municipal Council.

As Horacio drew rein before the fazenda-house, the door emptied forth a group of men and a clear voice called across the dooryard : " Ah, colleague ! Good day ! How have you passed ? "

Surprised at the salutation and yet half recognizing the owner of the vibrant voice as that one of his school-mates whom he would least care to see, he looked harder at the group and presently found his

suspicions verified, as a tall lad of pleasing appearance detached himself from them and sauntered nonchalantly toward him.

"Ah, Horacio—an embrace!" he murmured, ere Sor João could cry, "Dismount! Dismount!"

Horacio was obliged to return Alfredo's oppressively warm and friendly embrace before he could give his hand to Sor João and fumble for his letter of introduction.

"So this is one of your colleagues, come to hear you preach, I hope, Sor Alfredo?" said the hospitable fazendeiro, "here! just give me your horse's rein and go inside."

The hand which held the letter of introduction let it slip back into his pocket and then dropped to his side. He glanced at Alfredo with a puzzled expression on his face.

"Come inside," said the latter, with a gravely patronizing air, as he drew his arm through his.

Horacio followed his companion wonderingly and was presented to the group at the door—sons and nephews of the fazendeiro, a friendly colporteur and the district-school teacher, who was also an authority in literature, science and the arts, by virtue of his once having taken six lessons in Algebra. Horacio piled his equipage in a corner and sat down upon a bench.

"So glad you came along," remarked Alfredo, amiably, as he dropped into a place beside him. "Do you know, I was feeling very lonesome. They want me to preach for them on Sunday morning so I hope

you will share the pulpit with me."

Horacio almost thought he could hear the leaves of the sermon in his pocket rustle with indignation, but he was too proud to make a contention for the place. After all, it was probably a misunderstanding and a conflict of territory. Why should not Alfredo speak? He was first on the ground—but was there any necessity for him to remain and listen? Yes, he must remain, as the morrow was Sunday. The women were already laying the coarse cloth when Sor João returned to the house from the stables.

"You must pardon the intrusion, Sor João," said Horacio, rising, and determined now not to make use of his letter of introduction. "I very much fear you are crowded."

"Capaz! Just you make yourself to home. There's always room for one more here. We are right glad to see you. Sit down: sit down! We are luckier than we deserve. The Reverend Gentil wrote that one of you young men would be along, but we thought that we should be disappointed until Sor Alfredo come, and now we have you as well. Let me see—what is your grace?"

"Horacio de Castro, your servant, sir," replied the younger man.

"Well, Sor Horacio—we can have two sermons tomorrow. Sor Alfredo can preach in the morning and you can preach in the evening. How will that suit you?"

"That will do very well," replied Horacio, grimacing inwardly.

"But come and sit down! Dinner is on the table. Come everybody and sit around!"

The young men crowded at once to the table, for among the middle classes of Brazil the women eat in the kitchen.

The head of the house bowed his head and mumbled a long and nearly inaudible blessing. In his lap he held his youngest child, a little girl a year and a half old, who fed from his plate and wiped her grease-bedaubed fingers on his beard.

The food was abundant and palatable. Chicken, vegetables and eggs,—with coffee and milk to finish. In honor of their guests all were on their best behavior—as to manners—and Sor João must needs rebuke the pedagogue for scraping his plate on the floor for the benefit of the dogs that lay under the table and scratched for fleas, because the crunching of the bones was annoying during polite discourse.

"Take that fork out of your mouth and eat with your knife like a Frenchman! Who taught you manners?" he cried to his youngest son, "one would think you didn't know anything just because you live in the roça. It's terrible what disgusting tricks some people do have," he continued, with a sigh of pity. "That reminds me how I come to be a believer. Leastways that wa'n't all they was to it, but that was what set me a thinkin'."

He stripped a drum-stick with his strong teeth and went on between bites: "'Twas over to Campinas, where I used to live then. There's a famous church near by, you know,—the Penha, where lots of folks



go to get healed and to gamble, during the season. Judging from the number of wax figgers there is a hangin' up in the end of the church, I should think Our Lady would be too busy with her healin' to tend to the gamblin', but it seems she finds time for both.

"Well, I was over there one day, when I was still in darkness—still in Rome, you know—and what do you think I saw? Why, there was two women come in there, and a man with 'em—more shame to him! for you might overlook it in a woman, as their feelin's is more delicate and sensitive, they say."

He made a wry face and a digression to see that everybody had a full plate.

"Well, one of these women had made some sort of a vow, or else they both had—like as not if there should be an heir in the family, or something of that sort—and the two of them got down on their knees at one end of that church and stuck out their tongues and licked that dirty floor from end to end three times—thirty meters each way, at least—leaving a long wet streak behind 'em, and always careful to work toward the altar so as not to hurt God's feelin's by turnin' their backs to Him. 'If this is piety,' says I to myself, says I, 'I'm goin' to be a heathen!' and I lit out of there on the run and the first man I met on the street hollered after me and sold me a Bible; and I think he was a waitin' there outside that place just to pick up such backsliders from Romanism as me."

Dinner being finished, the host handed a large, heavy Bible with gilt clasps, to Horacio and laid a

pile of little hymn-books on the table.

"You can read us a chapter and make us a little talk on it," he suggested.

Horacio took the book and selected a psalm at random, after which he explained what he thought David meant by it. His audience seemed better satisfied than himself, and he turned with relief to the little hymn-book and gave out a familiar number. Here he was in his element, and sang with such good-will and melody that they caught the spirit of the hymn, which was entirely new to all, excepting Alfredo, and, ere he had reached the third stanza, not a single voice was silent.

One song followed another until a dozen had been sung, and two hours had vanished like an instant; then he called on Alfredo to offer prayer.

A moment later steaming pots of coffee, boiled with milk, and platters piled high with crisp fried-mush, sprinkled with brown sugar, were set on the table and suffered a terrible onslaught, after which all dispersed.

In the room-off the sala seven narrow beds were standing and it was here that space had been made for Horacio. On each bed were one or two hens, and these were hustled, cackling and angry, out of the window, protesting in vain against the filling of all of the beds with nothing but human beings, and jumping instantly to the sill again in a further attempt to dislodge the intruders, which, although earnest and fearless, was entirely ineffective, for their enemies piled indignities upon them by snapping towels in

their faces(!), and silence soon reigned in all the house.

The next morning, after coffee, family-worship was held, without remarks on the Scripture-reading, and afterwards breakfast was served, earlier than usual, in order that all might prepare for their five-mile walk to the chapel, for not a wheel nor a hoof might stir on all Sor João's place on the Lord's day.

Horacio thrust his precious sermon into his pocket and set off down the dusty road with the others, and, in the course of an hour and a half, all of them were come to the modest little building where the people worshipped.

At Alfredo's earnest instance the young man took his place with him in the pulpit, although he rather resented his companion's ministerial, long, black coat, which he considered premature and out of place.

All the boys bought Prince Alberts when they first entered the preparatory—whether they could afford it or not—and cultivated narrow, white ties. Horacio could not do it for two reasons—because he did not have the money and because he wished to maintain his self-respect. Alfredo was two years below him at school and had not even been instructed to undertake any practice-preaching, so far as he was aware, but his home was not far away and he had evidently borrowed a horse and set out on his own responsibility, without knowing that someone had been specially sent to do the work. Almost any other Sunday there would have been no one in the way.

While these thoughts, scarcely ministerial, were

flitting through his mind, his companion suddenly interrupted them by leaning over and asking him to make the long prayer, when the time should arrive. Horacio nodded, then remembered his dry and dusty throat and, beckoning the caretaker, or sexton, asked him to bring him a glass of water. To his dismay, the water came in a long-spouted, tin coffee-pot, or "bule", with no cup or tumbler. He looked at it for an instant, then boldly put the top to his lips, and, having satisfied his thirst, passed it to his companion. Alfredo gazed at it doubtfully, as he had done, then put the long spout to his mouth and gravely tipped it up.

It was now time to begin the service, and, a goat having been dislodged from its position on the stool, the wheezy little organ, much out of repair, was persuaded to lead the music, as well as its quavering notes would respond to the keys. Presently Alfredo arose to deliver his address. Horacio could see that he had no notes and that all his fine self-assurance had faded away, leaving him in a sad state of trepidation.

"My dear hearers:" he began, and jerked his hand loosely into a quick gesture—recovering it again before it was fully extended, as though he had suddenly changed his mind about letting it go. "My dear hearers: I wish to invite your attention to the first verse of the eighteenth chapter of the Gospel according to Saint Luke,—‘Men ought always to pray and not to faint.’

"I will now give you a striking instance of the

power of prayer. Jonah, my dear hearers,"—the loose-jointed arm jerked in irrelevant gesture, and continued to do so at singularly inappropriate intervals, throughout the discourse. "Jonah, my dear hearers! Jonah was a man that was a prophet! The Lord told Jonah to go to Nineveh, that great and wicked city, and preach repentance to the inhabitants. But Jonah was afraid and fled from the face of the Lord! He took a steamboat, my dear hearers, and went out upon the ocean, but there came a great storm, my dear hearers,"—gasp and a long breath—"my dear hearers! A great storm came! The winds blew and the floods came and beat upon that house—steamboat, I mean!—and the great waves came up against it. It thundered and lightened and the steamboat pitched about until they all thought they would be drowned. Then they fell upon their knees and called upon their gods and there wasn't anyone to steer the boat, so Jonah cried out that he had sinned against his God, and it was all his fault, and so they pitched him overboard, my dear hearers, into the angry waves.

"But a great fish came, my dear hearers, and immediately swallowed Jonah, and after three days and three nights it vomited him up on the beach in front of the City of Nineveh, my dear hearers. Then Jonah went and preached to the people and they all repented, my dear hearers! That great and wicked city of twenty-five thousand inhabitants all repented in sackcloth and ashes!!

"But Jonah was angry, my dear hearers, so he

went up on the hill, where the sun was very hot, and he prayed to God to slay him, but God sent him a gourd-tree which grew over him, so that the sun would not bother him. So here you see this striking answer to prayer, my dear hearers, and then an animal came and gnawed the tree and it died.

"Here is another striking answer to prayer, my dear hearers. When Christ was on the mountain in the garden, they came against Him with shot-guns to take Him, and they took Him and delivered Him up and crucified Him. So He prayed, 'Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do.'

"All this teaches us, my dear hearers, that we ought always to pray and not to faint.

"Let us sing hymn number one hundred and twenty-seven. Hymn number one hundred and twenty-seven—the first three stanzas!"

The weather threatened rain so ominously that they all set out immediately after the service to return to the fazenda, as it seemed injudicious to attempt to wait and hold an evening service.

At the cross-roads they stopped for a moment to await a stranger who signalled to them from a distance. A large iron cross stood at the parting of the ways, and, as Horacio looked at it, and wondered to see such a substantial emblem, Sor João explained:

"There used to be a wooden cross there, but my neighbor over here, when he got religion, couldn't bear to see no such Roman fixin's here, so he just come over and chopped it down—'the groves and the high-places', you know. Sor Elias, what put it up

there, he didn't know who it was that done it, so he set up another one and kep' an eye on it, and then my neighbor he come over again and chopped the other one down and burnt it, but Sor Elias he knew who it was that done it this time and he sent in to town and got this iron one, and then he sent word to my neighbor to just leave it strictly alone or he'd fill him full of buckshot. So my neighbor he thought he had gone as fur as duty called him,"—a chuckle from the narrator gave all necessary comment on his neighbor's valor—"so he let it alone thereafter.

"For my part, I don't believe as how we have any call to do no such violent acts as that. The cross aint to blame for nothin'! It's just the misuse of it, I take it. What do you think about it, Sor Alfredo?"

"I think you are quite right," replied Alfredo, puffing himself.

"You see those peanut-shucks there in the road," continued Sor João, "that just shows how these Romanists mix things up. There's that same fellow, Sor Elias, what put up that cross there, has gone and strewed them shucks at the cross-roads so that all the people that goes by on both roads will tread on them and make his crops larger, and, if that fails, why mebbe the cross will help him out. But here's—why blest if it aint Emilio! Mornin' Emilio! How have you passed?"

"Morning!" replied the newcomer, a brother-in-law of Sor João, "how have you passed?"

He shook hands and embraced and was presented to the students. Together they went on toward the



sito and reached it just as the clouds began to pour down a heavy rain.

Sor Emilio, like the young man with whom we have already made acquaintance, was a district-school teacher, and had walked over from his distant field of labor to attend church, but had been delayed upon the way.

After a lunch of coffee and fried-mush, family-worship was again held and then one and another called for a favorite hymn. Thus the hours were passed until the added darkness, due to the declining sun, warned them that the table must be laid for dinner, and so they cleared away their books from it that the women might spread the cloth.

Sor Emilio's voice, perhaps, aided in doing away with any lingering reluctance to bring the sacred concert to a close. Sor Emilio was very fond of singing and very proud of his voice, and it was something of which to be proud, indeed! He handled the four principal parts with equal ability, simultaneously and intermittently. Keys were, to his mind, properly employed in opening doors and drawers, but in music they had but little place. He fluted and flounced and trimmed the tunes with ribbons and plumes, and his voice in any part was penetrative and prevalent. Only Horacio's correct ear and smooth, strong voice kept the tunes upon their feet—with the aid of their staves—and even then they halted somewhat. He welcomed the diversion and gladly laid down his book. After dinner family-prayers came again and the evening passed as before, with discussion and

singing.

The next day was too stormy for work or for travelling and about nine o'clock, as they were gathered in the front of the house, a horseman splashed through the mud and rain, slipping and sliding, as though the animal which he bestrode would fain exhibit his terpsichorean proficiency and accomplishments—slide upon slide, stagger upon stagger, here a leg and there a leg and hard to say where the next would be and whether he could bring himself back to the vertical again.

The rider paid no manner of attention to his erratic progress but swayed his body in unconscious accord with the vagaries of his march, for a single-footing horse on a stretch of wet clay travels like a light-headed caboclo who has lingered too long at the *caçaça*.

In short, if one will ride on clay, with weeping skies o'erhead, let him put spurs to his steed and regard not the manner of his going nor that adage which would persuade him that the more haste the less speed, for mathematics will not save him.

The messenger drew rein and slid the last half dozen meters of his journey down to the door where Sor João stood watching him.

"Dismount!" he cried, "dismount and come inside! It's deep to wade and shallow to swim this morning."

He gave his hand to the horseman, who leaned from the saddle to grasp it but would not dismount.

Sor João stepped back again into his slippers and the protection of the doorway, which he had left to

salute the stranger, for the drip of the eaves had caught his bald pate as he stepped out into the mud in his bare feet. The messenger was a lad from Sor Samuel's, two leagues back in the forest.

"I cannot stop," said the young man, hastily and with a grave face, as Sor João urged him to dismount, "Sor Samuel's woman has gone home. She passed away yesterday and must be buried to-day, for she won't keep. We heard that there were services yesterday and I came to see if the Reverend Gentil would go to the grave. Is he still here? I must go on and let Manoel know, that he may make the grave. They will be here with the deceased in about two hours. They started when I did."

"Ah, I grieve to learn of our brother's loss. But the Reverend Gentil is not here to-day. He sent a young man from the Seminary. Perhaps the young man will go. Sor Alfredo! You will go to the grave—is it not so?"

The young man arose and came forward. "Really, you must excuse me," he said, with a slight shrug of his shoulders, "I have not the book of services."

"Don't let that trouble you," answered his host. "I have the book here. All you need to do is to read the service, make the prayer and give out a hymn. I could do it myself but the good Lord didn't cut me out for speechifyin'."

Alfredo gazed out into the storm. The wind blew the rain in sheets and the water skurried down the road and over every slope in torrents.

"Really, I think the service might be dispensed

with on a day like this. Where is the cemetery?"

" 'Tis a bit further on—about two kilometers down the lower road. The funeral will pass us here on the other side of the correço, along the foothill road. You can see them comin' when they pass the turn up there, a quarter of an hour away, and cross the bridge and join them down below."

"But will they come a day like this? How far is it to the house where the woman died?"

"Oh, two leagues or thereabouts. Yes, they will come. By to-morrow she would be stinkin' and this rain may keep up until then—who knows? They cannot wait on the storm."

Alfredo fidgetted from one foot to the other. "I am not feeling very well this morning," he murmured, "my throat—huh! huh!—" fetching a cough, "has been bothering me for some time." He coughed again, once or twice, in demonstration. "Let them do as they would have done had we not been here."

"Sor João looked toward Horacio. "And how is it with you? Have you a cold also?"

"I will go if you wish," he replied, disregarding the latter part of the query. "Please let me have the book so that I may glance over the service."

Sor João went to find the little volume and the messenger dashed off through the mud, leaving the news of the woman's death with the friends and neighbors wherever he passed.

"Have you a Protestant cemetery nigh at hand?" Horacio asked, as he took the little book from Sor João.

"No, it is not a Protestant cemetery, exactly. It did belong to Rome and was consecrated ground, but after the Empire passed away, the Municipality took it and made it free to all, only, to avoid trouble, we take one side and our neighbors who still belong to Rome, take the other." Sor João commenced to chuckle and there was a droll twinkle in his eye as some humorous recollection came to his mind.

"Sor Elias come by here the other day," he said, at last, "and stopped off to bargain for a horse I have, which he wanted to buy. I disremember what started it—ah yes, that was it! We was a talkin' of the tatús that got into the maize and destroyed a tremendous lot, burrowin' and stealin'.

" 'Hum!' says he, 'I see they're a burrowin' away, up in the graveyard,' says he.

" 'Yes,' says I, 'I noticed of it.'

" 'No doubt,' says he, 'but did you notice that they're a burrowin' altogether to get at the Protestants, while they leave our people in peace?' says he.

" 'No,' says I, 'I took no notice of it.'

" 'Of course not,' says he, with a grin, 'well, it's Gospel truth! How do you account for it that they should go over to your side and not come to ours? I take it they can't bear to see a heretic corpse a lyin' in good soil what's been blessed and sprinkled by the padre, so they've set to diggin' of 'em up to get 'em out of there,' says he, and laughs as though he had me there.

" 'Pooh!' says I, for he spoke first, and second-hand is best in an argument if it isn't in clothes, 'I

know what the tatús are after,' says I. 'They knew the' wa'n't no hope for you folks when the resurrection come, so they just set to to open up a way to make it easy for our folks to come forth, and burrowed down in our graves and not in yours.'

"He hadn't nothin' to say to that, so I thought I'd clinch the nail in him before he come up with something new, and so I just asked him why they buried those two lepers outside the graveyard-wall. They was good Romanists, both of 'em, but they wouldn't give 'em a place inside—he, he! He got red in the face and he says, says he, 'Why, it's ketchin', of course!' but I laughed so hard he grabbed his hat and rode away, and I fancy he aint found out yet what I was laughin' at. But go on with your readin', for they'll be along by-and-by. I'll have your horse ready, out under the shed there."

Horacio set himself to his studying and it seemed but a short time until his hostess thrust her head in from the kitchen, the rear window of which commanded a view of the road on the other side of the corrego.

"Here comes the interment!" she called, and disappeared.

The young man hurried to the window and looked out. Around the long slope of the hill a file of horsemen made their way, splashing through mud and rain. At the head of the procession two men, with breeches rolled to their knees above their bare feet and legs, bore a long pole from which the corpse was slung in a hammock. Behind them followed a



half dozen others, ready to take their turn at the pole when their comrades were weary. Thus they had come those two leagues and more that morning, and thus they would go on until they reached the little graveyard. The horses of those who were a-foot were led by their friends who were mounted, in order that they might not need to walk back.

Horacio threw his pala over his shoulders and mounted his horse to join them farther down the road. Sor João and two of the young men accompanied him. The others remained with Alfredo.

The little cemetery was surrounded with a white-washed mud wall, topped with tiles to shed the rain which would quickly destroy it if left unprotected. On the farther side rude, weather-beaten crosses marked the last resting-places of those who had died in the bosom of Rome, while plain wooden slabs, for the most part, indicated the sepulture of the Protestants.

The place was barren enough at its best, and, in the pouring rain, presented but a disconsolate and forlorn appearance. A large group of friends was already gathered at the grave, where one of the neighbors was bailing with a large gourd the water which steadily flowed into it from the upper strata of the surface soil.

"'Tis not a dry bed she will have," remarked one of the bystanders, as the bailer seemed to make no gain on the influx of the yellow water.

"What matters it?" replied another. "She has gone up higher!"



"True: true!" assented the other speaker, "but the seeming of it is not pleasant. It is bad weather to die in."

"For the pall-bearers?" queried the other, with a grim chuckle.

The head of the procession now appeared at the cemetery gate and the bearers staggered and slipped through it, digging their bare toes into the clay and struggling up the path, while the mud-bedaubed hammock swayed and strained at the pole. Having arrived at the side of the grave, they laid their burden down upon the ground and wiped their brows, streaming with rain and sweat.

The corpse had been wound about with many cotton cloths and wrappings, and was now divested of the hammock and stretched beside the muddy opening in the earth.

A hasty consultation ensued between the family and Sor João, and the latter presented Horacio. An umbrella was produced and, beneath its protecting shelter, he opened the little manual and read the service for the dead, amid a silence only broken by the splash of the falling rain and the rush of water as the grave-digger emptied his gourd.

In spite of the inauspicious circumstances, there was a certain solemnity about the little service, which was concluded with the hymn:

"Jesus resusitou! Certas as novas são!"

The corpse was then gently lowered into the water which still remained in the grave in spite of all the efforts of the bailer, but it would not sink to rest on

the bottom. It was necessary to retain it in position with the shovel until the earth which was thrown in upon it weighed it down into place. In a few moments the excavation was closed and the little company of believers scattered.

The rain continued throughout the day, but toward night the sky cleared and the clouds broke away, giving hopeful promise for the morrow.

As it grew dark a couple of neighbors passed, on their way home from a distant sitio. The younger of them bore under his arm in a waterproof case, a little guitar, or viola as it is called, which immediately attracted Alfredo's attention. With sparkling eyes he turned toward the newcomers.

"Oh, let us have a modinha! You sing, don't you?" he cried.

The young man shuffled his feet uneasily and glanced first at Sor João and then at the older man. "Yes, I sing—a little," he admitted, deprecatingly.

"Let us have a modinha then, won't you? There is nothing I like so much," insisted Alfredo.

The young man still hesitated and turned his instrument over and over in embarrassment, without taking it from the case. His older companion glanced at him in some amusement and finally said, "Give him a song, Celestino, if he wants it."

Celestino drew the instrument slowly from its case, ran his hand across the wires and hunched up close to his companion. Striking a vigorous prelude, he sang in a wierd falsetto of one So-and-so, who had a grudge against So-and-so.

His companion caught up the tail-end of this sinister statement and chanted it mournfully after him, so that he had time to repeat it and catch up with the other, and thus they finished it together, with a quaint harmony; but the fact was no sooner established than the falsetto announced quickly that So-and-so stuck his knife in the armhole of his vest and started off to So-and-so's house.

This second statement was immediately established in the same manner as the first, and then the falsetto went on to affirm that after So-and-so had courteously saluted So-and-so with a few choice Brazilian expletives, a second knife was produced by the gentleman not on horseback, whereupon the cavalier proceeded to dismount and there was trouble and disaster, and the dying rythm of this latter well-established fact faded away into a strain whose mournful cadence might well have served as the unfortunate So-and-so's requiem.

Alfredo was delighted and so indeed were a number of the others, but Sor João was not pleased. An almost unintelligible ballad of an African love-adventure followed, and then the travellers remounted and continued their journey, after gulping down the inevitable coffee, but Sor João had disappeared with Sor Emilio in the rear of the house to attend to his chores.

"We don't have profane music here any more since we came out of Rome and her vanities," explained one of the boys.

"But did you notice Sor João's feet a shuffling to

the music?" added one of the younger ones, grinning.

An hour had passed after this unfortunate trespass of the World, the Flesh and the Evil One, when the sound of approaching hoofs was again heard and the Reverend Gentil rode up to the door on his sturdy little nag. With an exclamation of mingled pleasure and surprise Sor João sprang forward and assisted him to alight.

"Ohé!" he cried, "what good fortune brings you here? We shall have the house full of preachers to-night!"

"What! is Horacio still here? You will be overcrowded," the Minister said, wringing the presbyter's hand.

"Capaz! There's always room for one more, and for a dozen—if they bring the Word with them."

"Thank you! Well, if you are sure I do not incommode? I did not expect to come this way. The bridge is down on the Rio Negro and I must needs let the believers on the other side wait until I can go that way again. You must let me know if they rebuild the bridge soon: if not, I must go around by the Ponte Alta next time. What!—you here, Alfredo?" He had been shaking hands around, and exclaimed at sight of the tall student.

"Oh, yes; I'm here. I thought I would come over and do what I could to help."

"Ah,—that is good! I am glad to see you. An embrace, Horacio! So you fleshed your maiden sword yesterday? Sor João,—did he do the Presbytery credit?"—this jokingly.

Horacio flushed and felt ill-at-ease, but Alfredo's composure was perfect. Horacio wondered why his school-fellow had been nervous in the pulpit. Sor João looked enquiringly from one to the other, and was about to speak, but the Minister went on :

"By the way, Alfredo, how is Sor Reynaldo's horse? He is much distressed about it."

"What horse?" asked the young man, with admirable poise.

"The horse you borrowed last week to ride home, and were to have returned to him, but it was too sick to send over. He showed me your letter and was anxious about the horse. The animal is a great pet and favorite, it seems."

"Ah, yes, to be sure," said Alfredo, with a frank smile, "the horse was doing nicely when I left. I shall send him home as soon as I return."

"Where has Sor João gone?" suddenly enquired the Minister, missing him.

"He has just gone around to the stable with your horse," said Henrique, one of the boys.

"Ah, — I must have my saddle-bags! I will go after them."

"It is not necessary, Sor Gentil! I will go if you want, but father will bring them when he comes," said the son, but the Minister was already through the door and halfway along the side of the house.

When he returned the table was prepared for supper and had been lengthened by adding a couple of boards, supported on boxes. All seated themselves and the Minister returned thanks.

"Sor João tells me that you did not preach for them on Sunday, after all," said he, presently, as the knives and forks began to fulfil their offices, and looking at Horacio, who flushed but said nothing.

"He was to have preached in the evening," said Alfredo, calmly, "but the weather was unpropitious."

"Sor Alfredo preached in the mornin'," added the host, with a bit of pork between his teeth, which partially obstructed the statement. "He got here first, you know. Did you send Sor Horacio, also?"

The Minister looked from one to the other of the two young men. Horacio certainly seemed to be at least a criminal—if one might judge from his face—while Alfredo seemed—at least—a saint. His serene self-confidence was undisturbed.

"Did you give my letter to Sor João, Horacio?" the Minister enquired, at last.

"No, senhor," replied the student, unhesitatingly, "I found that Alfredo had already arranged for the morning service and so I kept the letter. It seemed to me that there had been a mistake and I saw no need to say anything. Sor João opened his house to me most hospitably without any letter," and he smiled at his host to smooth away the awkwardness of the situation.

The Reverend Gentil said nothing but looked volumes. Presently he turned to Alfredo and remarked, indifferently, "How like your horse is to Sor Reynaldo's! I saw it just now in the stable."

"Yes, it is very much like his," replied the student, with unwavering eye, "I always thought they look-

ed alike."

The Minister did not pursue the subject further, but a sudden chill seemed to settle down between Alfredo and the rest of the company.

The next day Horacio went on his way and the Minister took the road in the opposite direction, but Alfredo borrowed a gun from his host and went off in the woods to shoot.

Towards the middle of that day the colporteur began to get well into the edge of the sertão, or virgin forest, only broken in isolated spots by clearings for coffee-planting. Here the corn grows among the charred ruins of the forest and only the decay which time can bring, finishes the work which the axe and fire commence.

In the little square holes, roofed over with miniature log-cabins of sticks, to protect them from the sun, the young coffee-trees were thrusting their brilliant, waxy-green leaves up through the interstices of their houses, while all the ground between, not occupied by the fallen timber, was devoted to beans or corn.

The great hoes fell heavily upon the ground, littered with last year's stalks and rubbish, as men and women labored to prepare the ground for the coming seed-time and harvest. The corn must battle with the woods in a life-and-death conflict, for plows were unknown and hands could not be spared to keep the surface clean.

In the damp spots, where the ground lay low by the margins of the countless streams, the little patch-



es of rice grew thick and abundant. In June it would be harvested, and men and women laborers, with knife in hand, would grasp its tall stalks with one hand, and gathering them into bunches with their fingers, would sever them from the root with the other, leaving only an uneven stubble behind.

A great patch of smooth clay would then be prepared and the grain beaten in handfuls to liberate the fat, red kernels of rice. Flails would free it from its husks and then it would be thrown high into the air for the wind to bear the chaff away. All this he could see with the eye of his memory and imagination.

From fazenda to fazenda and from sitio to sitio the road now led through the primæval forest. Often he clutched at Bonito's mane and lifted a hand to cast loose his carbine as a deer bounded across the path, but the carbine was long laid away. Bonito pricked his ears and looked back at his master enquiringly, to know the cause of his seeming indifference. A whir of wings and a brace of jacús flew into the lofty branches of a jequitibá from out the jaboticabeira where they had been feeding and preening. Deep in the forest he heard the shrill call of the inambú, and the macucu begged a shot from him as she flaunted her fine figure only twenty paces away. The instinct of the hunter knocked again and again at his heart and for a moment the traveller thought not of his High Calling but dreamed again of the chase.

Coming to himself at last, as the jolting of his saddle-bags called his attention to their need of adjust-

ment, he noticed that his stock of books was lower than he had dared to hope, and, giving the rein to Bonito, he spread his little gains upon the pommel of his saddle—smoothing and counting the dirty notes.

The metallic "tank, tank!" of the araponga, from a neighboring tree-top, thrilled his heart with a note of sadness, carrying his memory back to that scene of desolation when he had come again to the ruins of his childhood's home. Thoughts of those who had been so dear to him filled his heart, and among the dimly-seen faces which memory pictured there, two great dark eyes, framed in the sallow face of a young girl, stood out clearer than all the rest. Gathering up the reins that lay loosely upon Bonito's neck, he touched him into a gallop to ride away if he could from the oppression and the pain of it, but the pounding saddle-bags soon brought him into the quiet travelling pace which was more agreeable to man and beast.

Little by little the road grew narrower and the jungle encroached more and more upon it. Although used for ox-carts, the traffic was not very great and the road was sadly in need of repair. The great knobbed tires of the carts, aided by the flow of abundant surface-water from the frequent rains, had cut it down in places into enormous ruts through which his horse could hardly squeeze his way, and it was necessary at times for him to draw up his own legs lest he bruise them against the sides.

From the great trees on either side, the tangled cables of the cipós hung down or writhed their great

coils in tangled masses about the trunks. Many of the trees were clothed in brilliant blossoms. High above all others, the great smooth shafts of the jequitibás rivalled the corrugated trunks of the cedars. The spindling palms thrust their graceful, plumed tops up toward the sun, striving to come up to the shoulders of their greater brethren. Underneath all, the dense thickets of taquara mingled their canes in inextricable confusion. A break in the foliage presaged a clearing, and, presently, the young man emerged from the shade of the forest and came in sight of an humble dwelling in the midst of a feeble attempt at cultivation.

As he approached the hut, a swarm of little negroes emerged and as quickly scampered away, all save one, who put his little hands together, bowed his head and murmured: "A benção!" then he too turned and fled. A tall lank negress appeared at the door.

"Good afternoon!" called Horacio, coming to a halt.

"Good afternoon, senhor," replied the woman, languidly.

"Is there any means of preparing me a little coffee?" he enquired.

"Why not?" she answered. "Be pleased to dismount and enter.

Horacio flung the reins upon the ground and came to the door.

"Be seated," said the negress, hospitably, dusting a black and greasy box with her skirt. Horacio noticed that her smiling, white teeth were all filed to a

point—an African custom still surviving in parts of Brazil. It gave her otherwise pleasant face a somewhat feline expression, but as it could not possibly influence her temper or character, its effect was only upon the imagination. Among the blacks it is supposed to add greatly to the personal attractions.

"The coffee will be ready in a little moment," she said, "will you have it with mixture?"

"Yes, thank you," responded the young man, hastily consulting his stomach.

The children, in various stages of nudity, gathered with timid curiosity in the doorway which led from the living-room into the little kitchen behind it. Horacio tried to coax them forth to shake hands with him, but, like a covey of young partridges, they broke and fled again at his first advances.

"Que criançada!" exclaimed the mother, observing their behavior. "They see but few strangers here," she explained, apologetically. "Come here and say 'São Christo' to the gentleman!" she called, marshaling them in again.

Encouraged by his smile and a glimpse of his white teeth, which are an attraction no sane person can resist, the little Afro-Brazilians came forward one by one and, after clasping together hands which Nature had doubly darkened—once at birth and diurnally, ever afterwards, with the abundant soil about the place—murmured "São Christo", as directed, and retired to a corner of the room.

"Would you like to learn a song?" suggested the young man, hoping to break through their reserve.

"Now I shall say a line of it and then you can say it, and then, when we have learned a verse, I shall sing it. Now then! Prompto!"

"Prompto!" echoed the larger ones, promptly. Horacio laughed. "That's right," he said, "but 'prompto' don't belong to the song. Now then! I shall begin. Here you are: 'Vinde meninos. Vinde a Jesus!' All say it!"

Two or three made a stumbling effort. "Now, once again—all together! 'Vinde meninos. Vinde a Jesus!' There, that is better. 'Elle ganhou-vos benções na cruz.'

"'Vinde meninos. Vinde a Jesus!"

Elle ganhou-vos benções na cruz.

That is very good! Now another—

'Os pequeninos Elle conduz,  
Vinde ao Salvador!'"

The children repeated, and the young man resumed, "Very good! That is the verse, and then we sing a chorus:

'Que alegria! sem peccado ou mal,

Reunir-nos todos a final!

Na santa patria celestial,

Com nosso Salvador!'"

A few moments of practice and the little parrots had the verse and chorus: then Horacio sang, over and over again, the sweet hymn, "Come to the Savior, make no delay; here in His Word He's shown us the way; here in our midst He's standing to-day, tenderly saying, 'Come!'"

The tune was easy and attractive and Horacio had

it well fixed in the memory of the older children ere the coffee boiled.

"Please to excuse," said the negress, handing him a gourd of steaming coffee, "we have no crockery in which to offer it."

"Better as it is," said the young man, smiling and thinking of the frail porcelain at Donna Virginia's, which had filled him with apprehension.

"Here is the mixture," added the woman, setting a gourd of *farinha de milho*, with an iron spoon, upon the table.

A soldier's fare had accustomed Horacio to anything but high-living, nevertheless two or three spoonfuls of this corn-meal—pounded in water, fermented and dried—were enough to make him believe that he was no longer hungry.

"Well, I must be on my way," he said, picking his whip from the dirt-floor where it had fallen, "and what do I owe you for your kindness?"

"Ah, that is nothing! Do me the favor to excuse the insufficiency."

"Qual! Then permit me, at least—" and he pressed a nickel into the hand of the eldest child. The mother smiled appreciatively. He shook hands all around; made them sing the song once more, and rode off.





9

THE FIRST SERMON.



IN his pocket he bore a half dozen letters to believers scattered here and there through the sertão, and that night he proposed to make use of the first, remaining with a professed Christian who had already been advised of his approach in order that he might gather in the neighbors for an evangelistic service.

A long stretch of forest intervened between the settler's hut where he had taught the hymn to the children and the place of his destination, and Horacio wondered whence would be drawn his audience, in a region so sparsely inhabited, and in which he had passed so few clearings and dwellings ; but, as the afternoon drew on, he was turning toward the Tieté again and, every hour or so, each of which marked off a league of journeying, brought him to some small



fazenda or group of sitios, so that the country seemed almost populous in comparison with that through which he had been making his way. The road improved also, for the outlet of this district was in the direction of the river.

About four o'clock he turned aside to the ruins of what had once been a rather fine house and, upon announcing the purpose of his visit, was received with the warmest cordiality. Nothing was purchased from him, but his entertainer, after serving coffee, called in a numerous family and requested the young man to conduct a short service of prayer, announcing himself as a believer and a member of the church. Horacio was delighted to oblige him in this way, and, after the little service was finished, they sat and chatted for a few minutes before he went on his way.

His host was a magnificent specimen of manhood, broad-shouldered and erect, with a splendid, crisp, black beard and a mass of jet-black hair. His eyes were bright and full of intelligence and his every movement governed by native grace. Eight boys, ranging in age from six to twenty, were gathered about the room, taking an eager interest in everything that was said or done, and Horacio was surprised to learn that all of them were sons of his young-looking host.

"Yes," said he, with a look of fondest pride, in answer to Horacio's question, "they are all mine and all of them with good Scripture names. Here is one of the Major Prophets—I'll give you three guesses."

Horacio laughed and discovered in two guesses

that the boy was called Jeremias.

Thus the little impromptu game continued until he had guessed them all save one.

"This is the son of a patriarch," said his host.

Three guesses were not enough to determine the identity of this personage and so he went on guessing, while his host was giving him hints, and crowing over his inability to name the man. He had finally learned that he must be one of the sons of Abraham, Isaac or Jacob; had commenced with the grandfather and, naming Isaac and Ishmael, had finally reached the last of the sons of Jacob—as he supposed.

At last he protested, "I have named them all now. You must be fooling me."

"No!" said the proud father, laughing, "you have missed one of them."

"Then it must have been a son of Abraham by Keturah, and I confess I can't remember their names."

"Abraham didn't have any more sons than Isaac and Ishmael," asserted the host, firmly.

"Oh, yes, he did," replied Horacio, "but I can't remember their names, so I shall have to give up."

"No, he had no more sons," reiterated the man, with an air of profound conviction.

"You will have to have the Bible for it, then," said the young colporteur, laughing, and he reached for the Book and began to turn its leaves. "Here you are! 'And Abraham took another wife, and her name was Keturah. And she bare him Zimran, and Jokshan, and Medan, and Ishbak and Shuah.' There!

Is it one of them?"

The father of many Biblical sons, stared at his guest in ill-concealed mortification. He had thoroughly enjoyed patronizing the young man and testing his knowledge of the Scriptures, and now—his visitor had scored!

"No!" he said, somewhat testily, "it is none of them, but you have forgotten one of the sons of Jacob—Issachar."

"Sure enough!" assented the traveller, cheerfully, and arose to take his departure. His host's good-nature returned instantly: he thanked him cordially for the visit and bade him call again on his return. "My name is Mathathias," he said, in parting, and Horacio shook hands with the numerous family and mounted.

Toward nightfall he came to his destination, and was welcomed with open arms. Dropping wearily upon a bench, after saluting the various members of the family of Sor Rufino, he thought to rest for a few moments, until something could be prepared for him to eat.

"You bring books, I was told," his host at once began. "The Reverend Gentil wrote me that you would have some hymnals. We are sadly in need of them here."

Horacio nodded and pulled his saddle-bags toward him. Spreading his little stock upon the table, he selected the hymn-books and showed them to his host. At this moment the inevitable coffee was served them. The book-sale went on and with it a bit

of chat.

Horacio was wearied of the staple topic of coffee; how it had flowered; whether the flowers had "stuck"; what harm the frost of the preceding winter had done; who had sold; what it was bringing at Santos; when would the Sorocabana be able to move the accumulation, and how foreign countries could be persuaded to drink more and thus bring up the price, but, for the rest of the journey, he was to hear little but religion; whether So-and-so was orthodox, and why Some-one-else did thusly, when he must know that it was inconsistent.

"Did you stop at Sor Mathathias', as you come along?" asked Sor Rufino, finally, as he selected three of the little hymnals and put them aside. "He will be here to-night."

"Where is that?" queried the colporteur.

"Oh, a bit back along the road—about two hours. Let's see! — it will be three quarters to Mario's and a half to Jaime's, and a half again to Mathathias'. Two leagues that makes, lacking a quarter. 'Tis a good house, going to ruin, a piece back from the road, on the big creek where there is a fallen bridge and one gives a turn about to ford it."

"Yes, I remember now. I stopped there to offer them books and he said he would be along to-night. The believers must be much scattered hereabouts."

"Yes, they be a bit sprinkled, as it were, but they are most all believers—most all the dwellers hereabouts. Did Mathathias offer you coffee?"

"Yes, he gave me coffee," replied Horacio, with

some surprise.

"There, woman—see there! I maintain it and I ostain it—that man hadn't ought to do that! But it seems like he wants everybody else to be just like himself. I declare it aint Christian—no, it aint!"

"Maybe he don't know how it looks and what harm he might do," suggested his wife, charitably, as she flirted a bit of a dubious-looking cloth across the end of the table, in preparation for serving Horacio's supper.

"Capaz!" retorted the man, with a languid show of contempt. "He knows—no one better! Aint it been in his fambly these three generations and gone down to the children and to all them they married with? And now the Coutinhos has it and the Portugals and that girl of Ferreira's. No—don't tell me that he don't know, and I say as how that's what sets the Romanists against us. We've got to be awful careful when everybody is a lookin' for some loose end to get a hold on."

"I do not understand. What is it all about?" demanded Horacio, with some curiosity.

"Why, will you believe it that that fellow, Mathathias—splendid fellow, aint he?—big and strong and fine-lookin'—you wouldn't never believe it!—he's a morphite."

"Oh—a leper?" said the astonished young man.

"Yes, a lepered," replied his host, easily, "he and his wife and all those fine boys of hisn, and his sisters and his brothers and his cousins and uncles and aunts and grandparents, back to who knows where.

Why that fambly was rich, young man! They owned this land here, and all the land up these waters, and down to the Tieté. 'Twas six leagues and more to ride across it and who knows how much to go the other way. But it seemed like as if they sorter lost their grip when this thing come into the fambly and just let things go to the dogs, selling it off bit by bit or trading it away, until now they have only that old house—that was good once—and about a thousand acres of land that they don't do nothin' with, worth mentionin'."

"Are you sure it is really leprosy that they have?" asked the young man, doubtfully.

"Sure enough to swear to it," replied his informant, with cheerful grinness. "Eitah! Just get Mathathias to roll up his pants legs! He's a sight! The kids are turning blue already, —if you look close. Oh, it's sure enough! They spent an enormous pile of money a doctorin', but it wa'n't no good. Then Mathathias, when he seen it wouldn't do, just turned hard and bitter, and now a queer streak is on him. It seems just as though he was a wantin' everybody else to be like him.

"He asks everybody, that haint no necessity, to come in and have a cup of coffee, especially strangers, and it's shake hands and shake hands and more coffee, and shake hands again until you'd think there was no better fellow in the Province—State, I mean. I can't get over callin' it 'Province', you know!

"I got at the Reverend Gentil—last time he was here—for to have a talk with Mathathias, but, my oh!

—he's scared to talk with him about it for fear of hurtin' his feelin's and drivin' him away from religion. He goes there himself to hold services and eat, and even spent the night there once. I'm a thinkin' the neighbors ought to do something, but no one likes to make the first move. That's where the pig's tail twists!"

"I shall speak to him when I see him, if you are certain as to the facts," said Horacio, firmly.

"Well, I don't envy you your job, but 'quem aconselha não paga custas', (he who gives the advice does not pay the bills) as the sayin' is. You can ask anybody about the facts. I'm not the only one who knows about it. I like Mathathias. I always liked him, save for that, and it does seem as though his trouble had touched him here—" and he put his finger significantly to his forehead.

The beans and rice were now upon the table, together with a chicken which had been slain for the guest. Horacio did full justice to the repast, aided by his host, who had come late from the roça, and had not dined. The meal was half over, when a clatter of hoofs was heard and a horseman paused at the door.

"Ah—there is Sor Chico! Dismount, Sor Chico, and enter! How have you passed?"

"Well, thank you. Are you well? Are all well?"

"All well, thank you. Have you dined? No? Then you are just in time. Sinhá! Another plate for Sor Chico!"

A tall, thin, Don-Quixote-sort-of-a man divested himself of his heavy pala and, having given a hand a-



round, sat down on the chair that was offered to him, as though his hinges were rusty, and drew a groan from somewhere back of his wry visage.

"What—not rid of the fever yet?" exclaimed Sor Rufino, in cheerful sympathy.

"No, I'm not rid of it yet. 'Tis six weeks now that it is hounding me. Aches and pains in my bones, headaches, can't eat, can't do anything!"

"Oughtn't to be out in the dew-fallin'," suggested Sor Rufino, tentatively.

"Worship is more important than bodily health," rejoined the other, in a melancholy tone.

"Seems like as though we can worship better when we are well. Leastways, that's how it strikes me."

"I am in hearty accord with that sentiment," said Horacio, smiling.

The Long Man moved his hands aside to make room for the plate which was placed before him; then, disregarding the probability that grace had already been asked, joined them together over it and interrupted some statement of Sor Rufino with a second invocation, loud and lengthy. He then fell to upon what there was remaining of the meal, in a fashion which betrayed at least a transient alleviation of his loss of appetite.

Various believers now began to ride, or walk, up to the door, according as their homes were far or near. The table having been cleared of the dishes, it was moved to the end of the sala and a clean towel, with crotched ends hanging down, was disposed across its center. Upon this was placed a

large Bible, a hymn-book and two candles. Benches, chairs, stools, boxes, and boards laid across blocks of wood were arranged in front of this impromptu pulpit, and Horacio was then invited to take charge of the service. The hymns were sung with a hearty good-will and thorough enjoyment and, when he had read the Scripture-lesson, Horacio looked about over his little audience and prepared to preach his first sermon.

At the close of his address, a woman rose hastily to her feet and exclaimed, "Look here now,—you people have this religion, and that's all right, but you know everybody here has religion too. You just keep still and we don't mind at all, but we don't like you to say anything about it."

She sat down in a great flutter, but, apparently, quite persuaded that she had forever settled the serious questions which had long been agitating the neighborhood.

Late that night, after all were gone save the long, thin man with the melancholy visage and the ailment, and Horacio had already lain sleeping for an hour or so, in the bit of a chinky room off the sala, which they had given him, he awoke with a start and that conviction that he had been snoring which sometimes comes to us as a last, lingering rattle dies away in our waking throats.

The voice of his gossipy host fell on his ears : "Now, do you think so? As for me, I liked it very well. To be sure, the text was not a new one—John iii, 16, but all he said was plain and simple, and even

the kids could take it in."

"A talk for children! Just so! That was just what I didn't like! All Gospel and nothing—well,—doctrinal, I suppose I may say. Now, there is the Reverend Gentil! He is just the man for me."

"He's all right, to be sure," replied the other, "words just run out of him like water down the corrego. He don't need to do any thinkin', for him to talk. There aint a word he says has less'n seven syllables in it, I fancy."

"A fine choice of words, indeed," responded the Long Man, in a tone which seemed to have been brought on by his ailment. "Gives one food for thought. Why, I spend hours—hours? yes, days—I tell you, in thinking of what he said and trying to make out what he meant. Why, I can't find some of the words in my dictionary, and it's a good one too, whereas this youngster just used common, everyday words and I could tell in a minute just what he was trying to get at, without doing any thinking at all. He didn't have a black coat, either."

Horacio lost the rest of what was said, for he fell asleep again, but when he awoke the next morning it was still fresh in his memory and he determined to think about it as he journeyed, and decide where-in he had fallen short.





## 10

### AN OLD ACQUAINTANCE.



HE next morning the Long Man with the ailment accompanied Horacio for a few leagues on his way, after both had made the rounds of the houses in the hamlet, embraced all the men and accepted coffee from each housekeeper. Their

host accompanied them upon these visits of ceremony, and at last bade them farewell with cordial embraces.

"Adeus! Adeus! and a thousand thanks," cried Horacio, riding off.

"Until to-morrow," cried the Long Man, who was to return that way when he had attended to some business down the road, "if God wills; and, if not, until the day after," and he too rode off.

A distant thunder-storm grumbled gloomily from over the forest, in the direction of the Tieté, but the young man was due at a certain sitio that same even-

ing and could not delay his journey, so they set off, accompanied also by the gloomy grumbling of the long gentleman with the ailment.

"Father João, of Jahú, is holding a mission hard by, in the New Chapel," said Sor Chico, as they jogged along, jerking his thumb toward a cross-road to indicate the direction. "They are getting worked up over this district and want to try and bring it back again into the fold."

"Is it far to the Chapel?" asked Horacio, attracted by the name of his ancient enemy, and wondering if their paths were to cross again in this manner.

"Far? No! It stands down by this road, a quarter of a league or so. Don't you want to sell some Bibles to him?" and the Long Man chuckled, sadly.

Horacio smiled in answer, then suddenly checked his horse. "It is going to rain," he said, glancing uneasily at the sky. Let us turn back to the Chapel and hear Father João. I don't want to wet my books and I should like to hear what he has to say, if I can slip into a shady corner, for I know his Reverence very well and do not care to have him see me."

His companion seemed nothing loth to beard the lion, for the clouds were gathering rapidly and the first drops had already commenced to fall. Together they turned their horses' heads toward the cross-roads and, a quarter of an hour later, as the rain began to fall heavily, they drew up under the great shed, or rancho, hard by the Chapel, and made their horses fast among a half hundred others, ere they entered the little church.

The priest was mounting the pulpit for his sermon, as they entered. The Long Man drew Horacio into a shadowy corner, although the whole church was dark because of the storm, and whispered in his ear, "'Tis a good Presbyterian audience, come to hear him. There are Julho and Mario and Augustinho and a dozen more beside, but there are no women here excepting Romanists. I wonder what Father João expects to do with our people. I expect—"

The voice of the priest interrupted the Long Man, who drew back into his corner to listen unobserved. Father João's voice was clear and pleasant and his well-rounded and stalwart figure protruded magnificently from the pulpit, as he leaned out over his audience.

"My children," he began, "once upon a time there was a dirty monk called Luther, the same who is the spiritual father of the Protestant, blowhard preachers, and, consequently, father-in-law to the petticoated shepherdesses of the reformed religion; and this monk was crazy to get married.

"Of course he was not able to do this because, at the time in which he lived, the only known form of marriage was that administered by the Roman Church. Besides this, Brother Luther was very poor and he would have to support the future dear-half, and also the pack of babies that might come.

"So Brother Martin said to himself, 'I will invent a new religion, in order that I may have the means to eat, drink and sleep my fill. I, she, and those that may be added to us, will pass the time more happily



than can be imagined. In order to accomplish these things I shall take a Bible and translate it according to my views and plans. I shall alter its punctuation and take out all the texts that may not accord with the doctrine which I am going to teach to the people. In place of these texts I shall insert others which suit my purpose better and accord with that new life which I shall lead when I have laid aside this insupportable frock and hung it upon the last nail I find as I go out the door of this detestable convent, to throw myself body and soul into the free air, where I shall live happily and light of heart as a little bird out of its cage.

“‘And in order that I may bring many-people to my way of thinking, I shall lay down as the fundamental dogma of my new religion the principle of Justification by Faith—teaching that man may cover himself with vices and become the greatest wretch on earth but nevertheless will certainly go to heaven if—he only have faith.

“‘To loose-minded priests I shall say that they must forsake, once and for all, this folly of ecclesiastical celibacy, and put in practice that patriotic text which says: Increase and multiply.

“‘With these doctrines—insuring the most ample liberty—I am sure that, in a short time, I shall have running after me a great number of dissolute padres; an infinite multitude of criminals of all classes, and a vast army of lost women, which will swell the ranks of the believers of the true Gospel, to which I intend to give birth.’



"Thus spake Luther, and acted accordingly, and in this way he built up that sect of which we hear by the name of Protestants, and who, finally, are nothing more than the receptacle for the dung of Romanism, which pours into this unclean vessel all that which is without value in the pure and holy Catholic Church. All this I defy anyone to contradict!"

The priest paused and gazed triumphantly about. At his last words and challenge to the people, Horacio, who had been smothering his indignation with a great effort throughout the discourse, sprang forward, but the Long Man's tentacle-like arm shot out and drew him back into the shadow.

Shaking his head dolefully at the lad, Sor Chico strode forth into the middle of the church, drawing a book from his capacious pocket.

"Here is Luther's Bible!" he cried, waving it in the air, "and here is what it says on the doctrine of Justification by Faith: 'Faith without works is DEAD!' I denounce the statement made by Father João as a base and malicious falsehood, and challenge him to produce a Romanist Bible—if he has one—and show me wherein it essentially differs from this."

The meager form of the Long Man with the ailment seemed to swell into imposing proportions. His eye flashed fire and he waved the Bible menacingly toward Father João. In a moment the church was in an uproar. The Protestants, restrained until now by the influence of what was, at least in name, a sanctuary, burst into cries of applause and loud vivas: the Catholics, on the other hand, indignant at what

seemed to them an outrage and profanation, and forgetting that Padre João himself had challenged the refutation of his own statements, drew heavy whips and great knives for the vindication of their creed. In a moment there might have been bloodshed, had not the priest himself hurried down from the pulpit and thrust his burly form between them. It was not to his interest to have the responsibility for a scene of this kind in a neighborhood where four-fifths of the inhabitants were Protestants, so he chose the alternative of hurrying the opposition forth from the building, in the interests of peace, and when quiet had been restored at last, went on with his discourse to his own liking, but minus a large part of his audience.

In the bustle and confusion of this incident Horacio had slipped out to the shed, where he was now rejoined by the Long Man and, as the shower had ceased, they mounted and continued on their way.

At the house of a believer, where Horacio breakfasted, his companion bade him farewell and turned off upon another road, while the young man went straight on.

Jogging along upon his way, he was easily overtaken by a young caboclo going in the same direction, and not so much inclined to spare his beast.

"Good afternoon!" said Horacio, pleasantly.

"Good afternoon!" replied the other, looking at him with that infantile curiosity which every stranger calls forth in a countryman. The caboclo reined his horse back to keep abreast of the colporteur.

"Are you peddling? Have you shirts?" he asked, eying the saddle-bags.

"No," answered Horacio, "I have no shirts. I am selling books. Can you read?"

"Yes—a little, but I don't read often; only a stray newspaper, once in a while, when I get hold of it. What books have you?"

"Only the Bible, now, and hymn-books. The rest are all sold. Have you ever fallen in with these Protestants?"

"Oh, yes! There's a lot of them hereabouts. I haint got nothin' agin 'em."

"Did you ever talk with them about what they believe?" urged the young man, as he saw that his companion was not disinclined to conversation.

"I can't say as I have—very much," replied the young countryman. "It don't bother me what folks think, so long as they treat me decent."

"Perhaps it ought to bother you, though," insisted the student. "If a man were thinking that he had left ten contos of reis in that hollow log for you, wouldn't it be worth while paying attention to what he thought?"

The caboclo laughed. "No such luck," he said, "folks haint leavin' fortunes around like that in hollow logs," and he cocked his eye knowingly at the log, as though to size up its capacity.

"There!" said Horacio, laughing, "you are thinking about that imaginary fortune already. Just look here! In this little book you can learn how to find a much greater fortune than that. I want to sell it

to you."

The caboclo's eyes opened with wonder. "What might it be?" he asked, with awe—then, brightening with supposed understanding, "tells you how to pick the lucky numbers in the Lottery, no?"

"Better than that! It tells you how to come to the City with streets of gold and walls of jasper, whose gates are gems, and where everybody is happy forever. It tells how to be rid of our sins and find a Savior—and all for a mil five!"

"A mil five!" cried the astonished caboclo, "why, it's all leather and gold! You're joking! You can't sell it for three milreis, I know. I'll give you that much for it."

"No," said the colporteur, "I only want a mil five, —no more and no less. Is it a bargain?"

The young fellow took the book and turned the leaves with curiosity, then drew two dirty notes from his pocket and handed them to Horacio. "Here!" he said, eying him doubtfully, for fear it might be a hoax.

Horacio took the money and bade him find a place, past the middle of the book, where it said "São Matheus", to begin his reading.

At this moment they passed a turn in the road and came in sight of a little cabin, in the midst of a small clearing. In the roça, far away, a woman was working with a hoe. From the cabin came the sound of singing, and the cheerful notes of a lively Protestant hymn reached the ears of the horsemen.

"Let us stop here!" said the colporteur to his com-

panion, "I may sell some books. Oh, the house!" he called.

The singing continued, but, at a second cry, suddenly ceased. Horacio approached nearer to the door: "Give license?" he enquired.

"Why not?" came in a cheerful voice from within. "Have the goodness to dismount and enter! Excuse, for I can't go forth to meet you."

Horacio and his companion dismounted and entered. The house was more than usually neat. The sala, or living-room, in which they now stood, was floored with good, sawn planks, and the walls were white-washed around. Overhead, a ceiling of woven rushes gave the place an air of finish, and in the middle of the room stood a section of a great log, hollowed out like a canoe and full of water. In the water sat a middle-aged man, with a wooden tray across the log in front of him, on which were placed a Bible and a little hymn-book.

"Have the goodness to excuse," said the man, again, "I can't leave the water very well. You see, I have the fogo selvagem(wild-fire)."

Horacio now noticed that the man's skin was a deep color of inflammation, as though he had been stung by nettles.

"Are you poisoned?" he asked, sympathetically, seating himself upon a bench.

"Some sort of poison, I suppose," replied the man. "No one knows just what it comes from, but it never leaves a man until it finishes him," he went on, with the same air of cheerfulness.

"Does it pain you much?" asked the caboclo, with interest.

"Oh, it's not so very bad, as long as I can stay in the water. When I get out, it is like a thousand needles stinging day and night, but—praise the Lord!—it aint as bad as it might be."

"But how do you get along? Are you all alone?" asked Horacio, full of wonder.

"No, no—praise the Lord! My good woman works in the roça and at night, when she comes home, she fixes up the house. I do what I can at the sewing, though it isn't much. Praise the Lord!—we have no children now, to make matters worse, although there are three laid away in the ground. We have all we need and, when I am gone, her folks are well enough able to take her in. I have these blessed books and yet I was grumbling just now because, although I can read the words, I have only this little hymn-book without the music. I know no more than a half dozen tunes that my wife learned at the meeting. But—praise the Lord!—what a state I should be in if I didn't know any!"

"Can you read the music?" asked Horacio, with a curious tug at his heart.

"That I can!" replied the sick man, from his tub, "I learned to play the horn years ago, in the band at Rio Claro, but I have never yet seen a hymn-book with music."

"I have one in my saddle-bags now," said the colporteur. "I shall fetch it for you." He turned and went out. "Twelve milreis! Twelve milreis!" he

kept saying to himself as he went.

Of all his books, the hymn-books alone cost him anything, the others being furnished gratis to the theological students to help them out in their course. On the hymn-books the margin of profit was very small, and the prices were high. For this book at twelve milreis he must pay ten milreis on his return, yet the sight of this poor man in his great tub of water, was too much for him.

Returning to the house, with the book in his hand, he reached it out to the sick man. "Take it," he said, "it is yours!"

The poor wretch in the tub grasped the precious book with trembling hands and turned its leaves with eager haste, then looked anxiously toward the giver.

"But you have them to sell? You are a poor man, also? No,—I cannot take it without payment. I have money. I shall pay you. What does it cost?"

"That is no matter," replied Horacio, flushing at thought of revealing the price of the book.

The man seemed to divine his thought. "Tell me, or I cannot accept it," he said, seriously.

"I sell them for twelve milreis(\$3.00). They are not cheap," said the young man, after a pause and a moment of hesitation. He saw in the face of the sick man the effect of his words—a cloud which passed over it on hearing the sum named.

"Let us arrange it another way," he suggested, as a thought struck him, "the senhor will pay me one half, and I shall present him with the other."

The man's face instantly brightened and the cloud



passed from it. "Go to the shelf," he said, pointing toward it, "and you will find some money in a bowl. Take the six milreis and may God bless you! Twelve was more than you or I could afford, I fancy, but I accept with pleasure the half of the book," and he commenced humming a snatch of a hymn here and there, as he turned the leaves caressingly.

"Now, I shall sing you something you may not have heard. It is new among us. Turn to number four hundred and three," said Horacio, and then he sang:

"I am far frae my hame, and I'm weary aftenwhiles,  
For the langed-for hame-bringin' an' my Father's  
welcome smiles."

This hymn has been translated into Portuguese, to a suitable meter, and is sung to "Suwanee River".

The poor sufferer followed the words with rapt attention, exclaiming at last, "Sou eu! Sou eu! It is I!" in a voice choked with emotion, while the tears which the fogo selvagem could not bring to his eyes, ran down his cheeks and mingled with the water in which he quenched the fire of his malady.

The young men now arose to take their departure, much to the regret of the invalid, who urged them to await his wife's coming, when she would prepare coffee for them. Time pressed, however, and they could not wait, so they bade the man farewell and mounted their horses, but, before they were out of hearing, the voice of the sufferer was heard singing cheerfully:

"I have found a friend in Jesus;

He's everything to me :

He's the chiefest of ten thousand to my soul."

"He has found the tune on the opposite page—number four hundred and two—and it will comfort him," said Horacio, laughing contentedly.

"Do you know the whole book?" asked his companion, wonderingly.

"Pretty nearly," replied Horacio, "but there are many hymns and some of them are very fine. The Protestants sing them in their meetings. Do you appreciate music?"

"Yes, I like it. I play the viola a little and can sing some modinhas passably well, but I should like to learn these here hymns, if they can make that poor fellow merry."

"Come with me to Sor Erasmo's to-night and you will hear plenty, and also other good things—the Way of Life and the Secret of Happiness. Do you believe in God?"

"Yes, I believe there is a God—else how could we live? But I know nothing of Him, save what the Padres say, and they are always talking of the Saints and Virgin, and fingering the pennies with their sticky fingers. What does it cost to be a Protestant?"

"It costs nothing. The religion of Jesus is free."

"What! does it cost nothing to be baptized, or married or buried?"

"Nothing whatever. You may give of your own free will to help sustain the cause, but that is all. Repent of your sins and accept the sacrifice of Christ,—then confess His name. That is what it takes to

be a Protestant."

"I will think about it, but I cannot go with you to-night. I turn off here and must play at a baile near by, but I'll go some other time. Do you know your road to Sor Erasmo's?" he concluded, as he turned his horse's head at the cross-roads, and drew rein for a moment.

"Oh, yes," replied Horacio, pulling at Bonito's rein, "and, if not, I have a map and compass and can find it."

"Do not kill any rattlesnakes by the way, then," said the caboclo, gravely.

"Why not?" enquired the other, in surprise.

"They say the venom of the snake will take the power out of the needle, if anyone who has one of them things kills one."

Horacio laughed. "I have no fear of that! Well, good-bye! A pleasant ride to you! Do not forget to read the Book!" and he leaned across, from his horse, to shake his hand warmly, and spurred on his way.

The caboclo turned also—then shouted back over his shoulder to Horacio, who checked his horse to hear what he had to say.

"Better keep a movin'!" called the young countryman. "There's a bad place on the road, this side of Sor Erasmo's."

"What is it? A mud-hole?" asked the colporteur.

"No—it is far worse! There was a man had a grudge against another man and killed him: then he cut the corpse in pieces and hung them there, on the

branches of a tree by the road."

"I am not afraid of a dead man," said Horacio, laughing at the awe in the caboclo's voice and manner. "I have been a soldier. Is that all?"

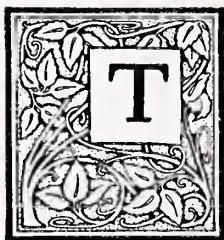
"No, it is not all. A neighbor went to hew out a monjolo, close by the spot, and when he had worked three or four weeks and finished it, he went to fetch his oxen and drag it out, but when he came back with the team, there was the devil, or the spirit of the dead man, in the form of a goat, on top of the monjolo. He got out of there as fast as he could with his oxen and left it where it lay. You can see it there yet—all rotten."

Horacio laughed again, to the great scandal of his new friend, and thanked him for his warning, leaving him shaking his head dubiously at his incredulity.





## JUDGMENT.



HE excitement at the Chapel having been quieted, and the sermon resumed, no further interruption disturbed Father João: thus he was able to finish his address to his own entire satisfaction and to the evident edification of his audience, now relieved of dissenting elements.

After descending from the pulpit, the great priest, whose bulk had been somewhat softened into podginess by advancing years and self-indulgence, stood about and chatted with various groups, discussing the incident which had disturbed the harmony of the meeting, slapping men heartily on their backs, chucking maids under their chins and joking the mothers about their husbands and babies.

There was a batch of these last to be christened and two or three couples to be married, as well as

a dinner to be eaten at a neighbor's.

The babies were soon disposed of, and the fat fees, for big and little babies alike, jingled in the pockets of the good padre's soutane. The weddings waited not for the civil ceremony, although the ecclesiastic knew enough common law to be perfectly well aware that his form of words was legally valueless without it. His charge was the same in either case, and his hearty laugh shook the tiles on their bamboo slats above his head when someone hinted of the necessity for going first to the magistrate.

The laugh shook the last lingering doubts out of the minds of the faithful and was frank and hearty enough to restore confidence even to a woman in hysterics. The priest had soon cleared these little matters out of the way and was on his way to dine with a well-to-do planter in the vicinity.

"What is not on the table is excused," said the padre, by way of grace, as he glanced at the loaded table and heaved a sigh of satisfaction, for he had labored well, and felt that he had demolished all the fortifications of the enemy and deserved his reward. The viands were certainly abundant, if not very choice and delicate.

"Sample this pinga, Father João!" cried his host, pouring into a large glass the transparent liquid which conceals such deadly effects in such innocent guise. "It is a special brand of my own. Eitah! what a flavor!" and he smacked his lips and rolled his eyes in appreciation of his own product, as he handed the brimming glass to the padre.

The priest's rotund face took on a tragic look of mild despair, which was almost pitiful. "God gives nuts to him who has no teeth, and teeth to him who has no nuts," he said, with another sigh: "the Doctor—alas!—has ordered me to leave off pinga, to reduce my bulk,"—then his face cleared and he measured his great girth as far as he could with his two hands. "I've quit for two weeks, now," he went on, joyfully, "and my belly has gone down three centimeters—think of that!"

"Measuring through, or measuring around, Father João?" asked his host, mischievously.

"Measuring around, of course," answered the priest, indignantly.

"Then that is nothing—nothing at all," went on the other. "You could squeeze your great paunch in more than that with the tape-line without knowing it. Better throw your doctor over and take a drink!"

Father João gazed wistfully at the glass which stood before him on the table, and for a moment he wavered, but his host took pity on him at last and cried out: "Come, my Father; here is a religious duty for your Reverence to perform! Drown the Devil and see the Blessed Virgin," and he handed him a porcelain cup, filled with red wine.

"How is that?" cried the priest, with a perplexed grin—the perplexity at the man's saying, and the grin at the wine—"ha, ha! I see, now! But where is the Blessed Virgin?"

"Drown the Devil and you will see her! Tip it up, Father João; tip it up!"



The priest "tipped it up" with a hearty good-will, and, as the grateful liquor passed gurgling over the devil that was painted on the inside edge of the cup, a figure of the Virgin appeared, painted on the bottom. At sight of her, the priest took in the point of the joke with the wine, and gave a snort of appreciation, taking a gulp of the liquor the wrong way at the same time.

Instantly he was coughing and sputtering and laughing, all at once, while his host slapped him on the back, to bring him to, and cried: "Pretty good, isn't it? I thought you would like that! I brought it from town yesterday, just for your Reverence."

"You must give it to me then, my son," said Father João, when he had recovered a little. "In my business one needs oft to drown the Devil—yes, and see the virgin, too," and he winked slyly at his host,

Then ensued such a drowning of Satan that even an electric battery would not have sufficed to resuscitate him when the good father was at last ready to go on his way: for he meant to sleep a couple of leagues farther on, that night.

"Well, let us be off, then," he grumbled, at last. "O necessario é preciso!" and he arose with the help of his hands on the table; but it required some little engineering to put him in his saddle, and the knees of his horse swayed perilously as he dropped heavily into the seat.

Two of the men who had dined with him were to escort him, and the little company of horsemen got started just as dusk fell upon the forest.

When they had ridden along the road a bit and gossiped of one thing and another, of a sudden one of his companions spoke up.

"Were I alone," he said, "you would not get me to go this road to-night, but, by good-luck, Father João is with us."

"Nor I," assented the other, "not without Father João: for 'the Devil flies the Cross'."

"How is that?" asked the priest, with a leer, expecting some piece of rustic witticism.

"'Tis the anniversary of the murder of Riberão Fundo," was the reply.

"What of it?" asked the priest, "but talk of something pleasant!"

"'Twas here ahead of us a bit," said he who had spoken first, "where he hung the pieces on the tree."

"And it is there, hard by, that the old monjolo stands, where the Devil appeared to Chico Ribeiro," added the other.

"What story is that of the Devil, man?" asked the priest, with an uneasy laugh. "We drowned him this day, sure enough! He'll not appear again."

His companions joined in his laugh with a marked effort, but the sound of their mirth was weird to their own ears in the night air of the forest. The moon was nearly full and had just risen above the tree-tops, casting one side of the road into shadow and the other into the light, while the night-birds called to one another from gloom to gloom.

"The whole trouble came of a pitiful goat. A quarrel over a goat! and he cut up Sor Pedro and hung

the pieces on that tree, over the road," said the first man, in a harsh whisper, and pointing as the tree came in sight.

"And then the Devil came, in the form of a goat, and stood upon the old monjolo, there," said the second, pointing in turn to the rude mass of wood that stood in a little open space where its superstitious hewer had left it, long before.

"Talk of something pleasant, man!" hastily ejaculated Padre João, again, with an attempt at a laugh. "Talk of cows or even pigs, but let the goats be!"

"Hush! What is that?" cried the man.

"What is what?" gasped the priest, with starting eyes, for at this moment something white in the moonlight, with long curved horns and flowing beard, sprang lightly upon the ancient block of wood. A loud shriek came from the terrified horsemen.

"Holy Mother of God! Exorcis—" cried the priest, as their startled horses sprang forward and dashed blindly down the road.

His two companions gained rapidly on him, for their horses bore lighter loads, and soon they had left him well in the rear.

Mad with drunken terror, he struck his animal savagely with his heavy whip. The poor beast swerved suddenly under the blows, bringing his rider heavily to the ground with his head doubled under his great shoulders.

A sickening snap and the mass quivered and grew still, in a queer unshapely heap, hunched up against the foot of a sapling.

The next morning, the young caboclo, who had ridden with Horacio, found the body of Father João, as he returned that way from the dance.

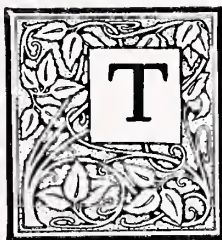
He it was who let the neighbors know what had happened, and when they turned the body over, a few pieces of broken porcelain fell out of a pocket.

On one of these bits the face of the Virgin appeared, and on another—the largest of them all—that of an evil, horned creature with a diabolical leer.





## FOUND.



H A T same night, our young colporteur held a service similar to that which he had conducted at Sor Rufino's and pressed on, the next day, toward the end of his journey, a couple of days' ride farther on.

Sor Erasmo had given him minute directions for finding the road but, either they were too minute or not minute enough: in any case, as the afternoon waned, he found himself unable to recognize any of the landmarks which Sor Erasmo had labored to impress upon his memory, and, as he went farther and farther along, his map and compass told him that he had made a wide detour and could not hope to arrive at his destination by following the road which lay before him.

Whether to return or to chance finding a stopping-

place a bit farther on, at which to pass the night, was the question which now engrossed him.

As he thought upon it, Bonito brought him to a clearing, and a glance ahead showed him a miserable house, or cabin of poles, with a thatched roof. Fences in ruin and a feeble effort here and there to bring the land in order, indicated that the owner of the sitio was one of those chronically indolent or discouraged persons to be found in all parts of the world, but especially in southern latitudes.

A couple of rakish poles in the quintal, striped with black and red, supported squares of weather-faded cotton cloth with crudely painted figures to replace the usual prints of Saint John and Saint Anthony. These curious works of art, indeed, looked rather like beetles than men, but, doubtless, were fully as efficacious in bringing good-luck as though they had been lithographed in four colors.

However this may be, as the hour was late and he was hungry, he determined to ask hospitality of those who dwelt in the tumble-down house.

Drawing near to the place, he perceived a man, well on past middle-age, leaning against the casing of the door. In the spare and languid figure, wasted by the fever and bent by labor, Horacio was astonished to recognize—his father!

A sudden grip at the heart caught the words from his lips; then he put the thought from him and assured himself that a chance resemblance was all that there could be in common between that stalwart, strong-armed parent of his and this poor creature,

who seemed to be trying to sustain his falling house, or perhaps they mutually sustained one another.

"I have lost my way," he said, after saluting the man courteously, "I must have passed a cross-roads without noticing. I was going to pass the night at Sor Martinho's—Sor Martinho Toledo. Have I gone far astray?"

"Yes, a goodish bit," replied the man, "—a goodish bit, indeed. The cross-roads is a good two leagues back—then two leagues and a half, or thereabouts, would bring you to Martinho's. You will find it hard to get there to-night."

Horacio hesitated and, at this moment, a woman appeared in the doorway and gazed out over the old man's shoulder. It was his mother! An inexplicable, perverse impulse moved him to restrain himself when he would have cried out.

"Could you make shift to accommodate me here, for the night?" he asked, at length, "or is there—" a better place, he was going to say, then changed it to, "any other place, farther on? I can sleep on my saddle-blankets, in any corner," he added, at sight of the troubled look on the man's face.

The woman started as he spoke and gazed eagerly at him; then her face relapsed into its former impassibility.

Her husband—or as we may as well say at once—Horacio's father, looked enquiringly at the woman; then straightened himself a bit and shambled down toward the rickety gate.

"Well," he said, as he approached, "we have not



much to offer but, such as it is, you're welcome to it. It's full two leagues to the next place along this road, and you can hardly make it to-night. Dismount, sir, and enter! There's a bit of corn in the payól, there, for your horse. Seems like I've seen that there beast before, somewhere," he added, running his hand over Bonito's neck, who sniffed at him as though he too felt a vague sense of recognition take hold of him.

"Like as not," replied Horacio, indifferently, as he slipped to the ground; "I borrowed him from a man in Jahú."

The man gathered up the reins to lead the animal away. "I suppose that is where I seen him," he said, turning away; "I used to live nigh to Jahú, a few years back."

A couple of young girls had now appeared in the doorway and, as Horacio shook hands all around, he found it difficult to recognize his sisters, and more difficult to restrain the eager questions which were struggling for voice.

Throwing his whip and saddle-bags upon a bench, he dropped wearily beside them and gazed about the room. Chinks between the poles which formed its frail walls gave frank entrance to the air from without. The floor was the solid earth, worn in ruts and hollows, upon which a rickety table stood uneasily and as though there were a continual controversy among its legs as to which should help sustain it; for one of them, at least, always refused to reach to the ground. Benches took the place of chairs and

a bottle in a tin holder, with a bit of cotton wicking in it, stood upon a shelf. Several small articles of little value hung about upon the walls, and, save these poor things, there was no other furnishing.

Several small rooms, besides the kitchen, were evidently partitioned off in the rear, and, standing in the kitchen with her back toward him, was a woman, old or young he could not clearly see in the obscurity, yet the outline of whose figure caused his heart to thump in his bosom.

At this instant she turned, as he spoke in reply to a question of his mother. "Yes," he replied, to the questioner, "I am peddling, but only books."

His mother gave a half-sigh of disappointment. "I was a-hoping one of those Turks would pass this way soon," she said. "We have no money to buy books and there couldn't none of us read 'em if we bought 'em, but I'm needing some cotton-goods for the girls."

Horacio still kept his eyes upon the passage-way that led out to the kitchen, but the woman had disappeared. "I am sorry," he answered his mother, absently, "but I have only books."

The old man now entered and sat down upon a bench. Horacio wondered where his two brothers were. Perhaps they were not living—he remembered the disaster which had swept the family from their home.

"You are not well, sir?" he enquired of his host, to make conversation.

"No, I can't say as I enjoy very good health here.

We seem to have settled in a right unhealthy spot. When one of us aint down with the maleita, another is, and mostly we have it all the time. See these arms, young man! When I came here there was no man hereabouts could show a likelier arm, nor stick by the hoe as long, and now—look at them!” and he rolled up his sleeves to display his meager and shrunken members.

“And isn’t the land good for crops, either?” asked his son, with growing pity.

“Good? None better! This land is as rich as one could wish; but what can you do without arms to till it, and sick all the time? Arms are mighty scarce in these parts. They all go to the big fazendas near the City and we sertanejos must do our own work. That’s all right for them as has families, but them that hasn’t must rot like fallen timbers on the soil and at last mix with it,” and he looked sadly about the place.

“But have you no one to help you, sir?” asked Horacio, dreading the reply.

“No, I haint no one,” was the answer, “—that is, I have two boys,”—Horacio’s heart bounded—“fine boys, too, but they might as well not be mine, for all the good they do me.”

“How is that?” asked his son, wonderingly.

“Oh, it’s a long story,” responded the old man, and I don’t know as it’s worth the telling,”—then, encouraged by the show of interest, for even those who have outlived most of the storms of life do not outlive the mild frailty of responding to this sort of

subtle flattery—"you see, I had a fine little place over nigh Jahú, as I said, but my other son got mixed up in some trouble and his enemies fixed themselves up like Injuns one night and came over and burned us out. Only for the fact that we was warned, we would have been burnt in our beds or shot down as we run out, for we lay hidden in the brush and heard 'em a-talking.

"Seems as though they thought we was burned with the house, for they never troubled to follow us. They killed my oxen and stole what they wanted, and all we got away with was the bit of stuff we could put on the horses, so we came over here and settled down where no one knew us. I bought this bit of land from Sor André, who lives two leagues farther on along this road. He's the richest man in all this country—but he's hard! Yes, he's hard—not to say something worse—but then I suppose I have no cause to complain.

"I was a stranger and I give him some money, and papers instead of the balance, for his land; and then I left the boys, taking what cash I had remainin', and bought some things I needed—tools and the like. Then we all fell to and made the clearin' and put up this temporary house, thinkin' to better it later on. Then we began getting sick and it's been the same old story ever since. When the time came to make the payments I couldn't do much of anything," and the old man leaned forward and stared at the floor, shaking his head wearily.

"So the interest grew," he went on, at length,

"and then there was interest on interest, and, do all I could, the payments I made him were small. So at last he took the boys over to work on his place, to keep the interest down. He only allows them nine hundred reis a day and gives them a place to sleep and a part of what they need to eat. I furnish the rest. He keeps their wages to apply on the interest."

"How long have they been there, now?" asked their brother, with all the indifference he could assume.

"Let me see! It is going on two years, now," his father answered. "Seems like, with all I have paid, that I ought to get ahead on what I owed, but it is still bigger than it was at first."

"May I ask what interest you are paying?" said Horacio.

"Why not? It is two per cent. a month."

"That is a good deal. Was the amount great that you owed him?"

"No, not very large. It was four hundred milreis. You see, I bought one hundred alqueires at ten milreis the alqueire, and I gave him six hundred milreis that I had from my brother, who died a year or so before we come here—the rest of what I had I used in stockin' the place. But stay—I'll show you the papers!"

With that open frankness common to country-bred people everywhere, the old man went to a box in which he kept some odds and ends along with the papers, and, fumbling them over, brought forth some

soiled and worn documents for his son's inspection.

"I cannot read," he said, "but I pretty near know them by heart,—I have had them read to me so many times."

Horacio read the papers with great care and found them in proper form, as nearly as his good sense could determine. On the back of the contract were endorsed the payments, each receipt being accompanied by the proper revenue-stamp. Reading aloud to the old man the amounts and dates of payment, all appeared to be perfectly correct.

"What are wages worth, for farm-hands, hereabouts?" he asked, when he had completed his examination of the papers.

"Oh, two mil five and keep, generally," replied his father.

"Are your sons large and strong, and good workers?" enquired Horacio, beginning to see light.

"That they be—none better! But Sor André says he has to keep them the whole year round and that makes a difference; but I wish they might come to me during the slack times over to his place, that he talks so much about."

"Then—let me see!—three hundred and thirteen days for the year, not counting Sundays, although I suppose they work Sundays the same as other days—no?" and he glanced enquiringly at his father. The old man nodded, affirmatively. "Well, never mind the Sundays! Three hundred and thirteen by two men for two years makes four times three hundred and thirteen, or twelve hundred and fifty-two, times

nine hundred reis would make one conto and one hundred and twenty-six mil eight hundred reis. Now we shall add to that amount one conto six hundred milreis you have paid in cash, as credited here on the back of the papers, and that makes about seven times what you owed him originally, and all this for interest, because he claims that you still owe him more than the original amount. In addition, you say that the wages are worth at least three times as much as he is allowing the boys. In other words, you have paid your debt and he owes you a nice bit of money besides."

The old man gazed at his son with puzzled eyes, unable to take in the full significance of such a revelation. "Sobre teres e haveres movem-se muitas demandas," he finally philosophized. "It may be as you say, young man, but might is right here, if indeed it be as you say. What can I do? He will take the land and turn us out, and I have not a vintem with which to begin life elsewhere. This is what the contract says! Read it and you will see that I have already forfeited the place and it is only through his forbearance that I remain here."

"Humph!" ejaculated the young man; "a profitable forbearance for him! but from what little I have learned at school, I judge that his accepting your money, without taking advantage of the first delays in your payment, constitutes a full renewal of your contract."

"Ah, you do not know our people here. You are from the City, I take it? Sor André does not mind



small irregularities. If I protest, he will send his capangas to burn the house over me. No,—he must have his will. Alas,—I do not know what will come of it! It is true there is a way, but I do not know whether even that will suffice. All this is come upon me because of that wild son of mine who meddled with the affairs of his betters and in what did not concern him. Oft have I been minded to curse him for the evil he has wrought!”

The words which Horacio had been about to speak died on his lips at the old man's bitter tone. A light step was at the door and a young woman, who might have been any age from twenty to thirty, brought a cloth and spread it on the unstable piece of furniture which did duty as a table and which was never at rest upon the uneven floor. The old man gathered his papers and put them away. The young woman did not look at Horacio, but, in spite of the aspect of her face, which was haggard and wan, and the languor of her movements, brought on by ill-health, he caught a glimpse of her great dark eyes and knew that it was Anna.

“Good evening!” he said, hesitatingly.

“Good evening, sir!” she replied, and extended a limp and reluctant hand, which she released again as quickly as she could from his warm and hearty grasp and left the room. His sisters completed the serving of the meal, and, when it was ready, father and son sat down together to the humble fare.

Almost immediately afterwards the women arranged a husk mattress, with a sheet and a bit of blanket,

on a homemade bedstead in an inner room, and bade their guest choose his own hour for retiring.

The two men sat together for some time in aimless conversation, the old man enjoying this little glimpse of the outside world, while the young man answered absently as he turned his thoughts over and over in his mind, about one central axis. At last he arose and went out under the stars and strolled about the curral, thinking of what he should do.

Suddenly he heard a light step beside him and a hand touched him on the arm.

"Horacio!" said a well-remembered voice, softly; "here is the package you left in my care."

Horacio turned in wonder at the sound of his name, and caught the hand that held the package.

"Anna!" he cried, "what is this?"

"Let me be!" she answered, coldly, but he would not let her go, although she struggled for her liberty.

"Not until you answer my questions. Will you promise?"

"Yes," she said, in the same tone as before, "I will answer your questions. You have the right to ask."

"What is this in the package?" he asked, releasing her hand.

"'Tis the little hoard of your savings which you left hidden in the house where only you and I knew the place."

"I had supposed it burned with the house! And so you kept it all these years, when in such dire need? Why did you not give it to my father?"

"It was yours," she said, simply. Her loyalty touched him.

"Anna," he said, with broken voice, "I have mourned thee all these years."

"You never came," she answered, coldly, and moved away from him as though she would leave him; "—you, a hunter, not to find us!"

There was reproach in her voice and he was glad to be able to answer frankly: "Anna! They conscripted me by force the next day, at Brótas, and it was only after nearly four years of service that I could return, to find the ruins of the house and learn that you had all been slain by the bugres. Do not reproach me! How could I do otherwise?"

The constraint in the girl's manner lifted for a moment—then the old cloud fell across her face. He caught at her hand, but she held it resolutely behind her back.

"Anna!" he cried, again, "why dost thou remain indifferent? I have explained what must have seemed cruel and heartless. Hast thou not forgiven?"

"I forgave thee then," she answered, gently, "although I could not understand. But it is too late now! I am going away to-morrow." She did not say what was too late, but her voice was unutterably sad.

"Going away! Where?"

"I am going to marry Sor André."

Horacio staggered as though stunned with a blow. His newly-revived hopes began to be dissipated like a dream. But, no—he would not find Anna just to

lose her: he would protest: he would cry out against it: she could not wish him to do otherwise.

"I came in good time!" he cried, firmly. "Thou shalt never marry him! I will not have it so!"

"I must," she answered, simply.

"Dost thou wish to do so?" he asked, coldly.

"Do not ask me that. Thou hast no right."

"I have a right! Dost thou not owe me that much?"

"Do not remind me of my debt to thee. It is not generous."

"That is true. Forgive me," he said, with self-reproach, "but tell me, Anna, dost thou—dost thou—love him?"

The girl looked at him steadily for a moment and then turned again to flee from him. Suddenly a thought struck Horacio.

"Is it because of that miserable contract?" he cried, impetuously. "You do it to cancel the debt?"

The girl's face was telltale in spite of the darkness. She tried to flee but he ran after her and caught her in his arms.

"Anna, I say thou shalt not marry him! Thou dost not love him!"

"Let me go! Let me go!" she cried, as she struggled to be free.

"Wilt thou listen to me if I let thee go?" he asked, sternly.

"Yes," she gasped, with a sob in her voice, "I shall listen."

"Anna, didst thou suppose that I could desert my

father, now that I have found him?"

"I did not know," she answered, hesitatingly. "I was afraid—that is—when thou didst not reveal thyself——"

"I see. It was wrong. I do not know what possessed me. At first I did not know him and I needed time to think, but I shall ask his forgiveness, and I shall not desert him. I have a plan which I have been turning in my head all the evening: there only lacks one element to ensure success, and perhaps we may risk it. To-night I shall not speak, for he has already retired. Meanwhile,—let me see! Anna,—wilt thou do as I bid thee? I promise that I will care for my father: wilt thou obey me?"

The girl hesitated for a moment and then said, thoughtfully: "Thou art not the same Horacio. Thou art changed. Thy very language and manner of speaking are different. Thou hast the air of the City. How can I tell?"

"How didst thou know me when I came?"

The girl laughed, mischievously. "How, indeed? How could I help knowing thee?" She did not realize how much she was conceding.

"Then, if thou knewest me when my own mother and father did not know me, I must be the same Horacio. Wilt thou promise?"

"Thy mother did know thee," she said, to gain time. "When she came to the kitchen, she looked at me and our lips formed the same word. Then a tear stole down her cheek."

"Poor mother!" said the young man, and a shade

of sadness crept into his voice. "I shall not keep her waiting long. Come, Anna; wilt thou promise to do as I direct thee?"

"Yes," she answered, at last. Horacio then revealed his plan, in rapid words.

"Good-night!" he said, finally. "Permit me now as a brother to embrace thee. We shall meet again."

He put his arms about her and kissed her on both cheeks, but thought that she was not pleased. Nevertheless, he pressed her hand again, and turned away toward the house.

Having hastily written a note by the light of the little flickering lamp which hung against the wall, he laid it upon the doorstep, and when he looked again, it was gone.





## FIRE WITH FIRE.



OR a long time that night, as he lay on his bed, whose husks rattled uneasily as he turned from side to side, Horacio courted sleep in vain. One wild plan chased another through his troubled brain until he finally fell asleep of sheer

fatigue.

He was awakened by the rapid patter of pacing hoofs, approaching the door. The sun had long since crept above the horizon and the family was stirring about the house. He heard a masterful voice greet his father from the gate of the little curral. Rising from his bed he put on the remainder of his clothing and went out into the sala. His father had already left the house and was leaning over the gate, talking with a man on horseback, who held by the bridle-rein another animal, bearing a woman's saddle.



The young man stepped to the doorway in order that he might have a better look at the stranger, and began the inspection with the horse, as any ex-cavalryman should do. The beast was a noble creature who arched his proud neck and shifted uneasily about under the restraining hand of his rider. A handsome saddle, mounted with silver, matched the luxurious bridle and was overlaid with the skin of some animal, upon which sat negligently but securely a finely-formed man of about forty-five. His swarthy skin betokened some admixture of African or Indian blood, while the coarse black hair which showed beneath his fine hat, bore witness to the same.

All this Horacio took in at a glance, as well as the short repeating-rifle which lay across the saddle in front of him—a weapon sufficiently uncommon in the hands of a Brazilian to attract attention at any time, and especially from Horacio, but it was upon the man's eyes that his glance lingered longest. Black, cruel, daring, but cowardly eyes they were, and revealed the soul almost aggressively.

An earnest discussion was evidently taking place. Finally the man dismounted and, tying his horses to a strong post, entered the gate and approached the house with the old man shambling along at his side.

"Sor André dos Campos—what is your grace?—I forgot to ask," said the latter, turning toward his guest as he waved his hand from one to the other in presentation.

"My name is Horacio,—your servant," the young man replied, simply, and, controlling his repugnance,

shook the proffered hand.

The old man started slightly as he heard the name which the young man gave, and looked at him sharply for an instant. At the same moment he was undergoing a piercing scrutiny from the black eyes of the local magnate, who wondered at his presence in the neighborhood. As it was common custom to give only one's baptismal name, no special notice was taken of Horacio's failure to mention his surname.

Striving not to appear to notice the dual inspection, he made some trivial remark on some common-place subject, and the old man took his eyes from him and turned toward the door near which they had been standing.

"Sinhá!" he called, toward the interior of the house, and, as his wife appeared in the kitchen-doorway, he added: "Here is Sor André. Send Anna!"

His wife came forward slowly, wiping her hands on her skirt. "Good mornin', Sor André! How have you passed?" she said, giving her hand to the rich fazendeiro. "Anna is not here. I do not know where she is. I went to her room a moment ago, but her bed had not been slept in. Likely she is in the roça."

"What jugglery is this?" cried the dark man, angrily. "Would she spend the night in the roça? No! She knew I was coming to fetch her and you have put up some trick between you to hide her. But, take care! My patience has not callouses."

"I assure you, Sor André, I know nothing of her," said the old man, piteously. "'Twas only yesterday

she said she was ready to go with you, and I have not heard a word since."

"Don't come to me with your pack of lies!" retorted the fazendeiro, brutally. "Go find the girl this instant or I shall have no more words with you! Off you go—bag and baggage—this very day! There are limits!"

The old man turned to his wife with trembling lip and anxious mien. "Send the girls to hunt her, *sinhá*," he said, in a broken voice. "Surely she cannot be far away. She was here when I went to bed last night."

The woman turned to do his bidding, but halted at the sound of Horacio's voice.

"You will not find her," he said, quietly, to his mother, and thought that a faint flash of relief flitted across her impassive countenance.

"What in the name of a thousand demons have you got to do with it?" shouted the fazendeiro. "Who is this fellow?"—turning to the old man.

"Sir,—what do you know of her?" enquired the old man, anxiously, of his son, disregarding his landlord's question.

Without stopping to think, Horacio said, calmly, "She is far away, on the road to the City, as fast as my horse can carry her," and instantly repented his indiscretion. The fazendeiro's face immediately lightened.

"Well," he said, "I don't know why you are mixing in this affair nor what you hope to get out of it, but that we shall settle afterwards. Pinhal, there,

will bring me up with her in a very short time, I fancy, and we shall have an end of this nonsense. There are two roads to the City, and that which she has taken will show the prints of your horse's feet—chivalrous young meddler! So long!" and he turned away.

Horacio sprang forward and caught him by the arm. The fazendeiro turned and drew a long, silver-mounted knife from its sheath. The women screamed and the mother took a quick step forward. Horacio was standing with folded arms, and a calm smile was on his face. His coolness disarmed the wrath of his opponent for an instant.

"You will not follow her!" said the young man, firmly. "Do you wish to know why? This is why. See yon bird," and he pointed dramatically to a small hawk on a distant tree-top. All turned their heads in surprise to look, and, improving this opportunity, he reached quickly forward and snatched the rifle from the astonished fazendeiro.

Now it was that he marked the measure of his man, for the fellow, at sight of the weapon in the hands of his adversary, betrayed every symptom of arrant cowardice. His color fled and left him like chalk, while the keen knife fell from his trembling hand as he fixed his eyes on Horacio, unable to take them from the stern young face.

Without giving heed to the dismay which he had caused, the hunter raised his arm, and, with joy in his heart as the weapon came to rest against his shoulder and his keen eye glanced swiftly along its

sights, he pulled the trigger. A flash—a report, and all eyes followed his gesture.

“See there!” he cried. “Coitado! He never knew what struck him.”

From the distant tree-top a few feathers floated away on the light breeze and the hawk’s mutilated body fell vertically to the earth.

“No one can shoot like that save my son—my Horacio!” cried the old man, in amazed uncertainty.

“Horacio!” cried his mother, unable any longer to restrain herself, and burying her head on his shoulder.

Sor André was greatly astonished at this little drama and looked on in mingled perplexity and dissatisfaction. When the mother had liberated her son it was the father’s turn to clasp him in a tender embrace: then the lad turned to the fazendeiro and handed him back his gun.

“Sor André,” he said, “you have oppressed and defrauded my father too long. He is an old man and cannot claim his rights. Last night, by chance, I happened here and discovered that those whom I had thought long since dead, are still alive. I am here now, and I shall claim my father’s rights for him. By the papers which he showed me, when he did not yet know that I was his son, I find that your little scheme is one that will not bear investigation beyond the sertão. You are mighty, here—no doubt—but, I warn you: do not trifle with me! I have been a soldier, and before I was a soldier I had been a hunter. I fear you not, and I never miss my mark.

I could have slain you now, but forbore. Why should I not slay you? What use are you to anybody but yourself? Begone! lest I change my mind. But mark my words and mark them well! I hold you responsible with your life for each of theirs. I shall expect my brothers here this afternoon with wages—with their just wages—do you understand? And as for this property—it is my father's, as you very well know!"

Saying this he turned his back and, without a glance at the abashed bully, entered the house. Only the moral effect of his courage kept him from being shot down in his tracks by the irate scamp outside. A moment later he heard the sound of a retreating gallop and his quick ear told him that it was not on the road to the City.

"Fear is the best watchman," he remarked, sententiously, in answer to his parents' doubts.

It was a happy moment for them when, in the hour of their direst need, they found a supporter in the son who had been lost to them for so many years. Scarcely could they leave him an instant or take their eyes off his handsome face.

"How thou hast grown, my Horacio! Thou art not the same Horacio," cried his mother, in perplexity, holding him off at arm's length, while the two girls clung to either elbow.

"Yes, I am the same Horacio," he answered, laughing. "Forgive me that I did not reveal myself sooner."

"I knew thee," his mother answered, simply.

"Thou knewest him and yet saidst nothing, *sinhá*?"

queried the old man, in puzzled bewilderment.

"Yes, she knew me, my father," said Horacio, "and so did Anna. That is why I sent Anna away—because of Sor André, you know."

"I begin to understand," replied the old man, "but tell us all about it, for my head goes around. Shall I have your brothers back again? What shall we do with Sor André's enmity? Where hast thou been and why didst thou not come to us long ago? So this is why I knew the horse! See what I have for thee," and, without waiting for answers to his questions, he hurried to his room and brought a long bundle of rags which he quickly unrolled before his son's wondering eyes.

"My rifle!" cried the young man, at last, with a gasp of pleasure, and hugging it to his bosom notwithstanding the abundant grease with which it was covered.

"He has kept it clean all these years," said his mother, proudly.

"And let no one use it," added his father. "See, here are cartridges, also!"

Horacio turned the weapon over and over, wiped the grease from it, and put it to his shoulder.

"Hast thou a horse to spare, my father?" he asked, suddenly. "If there is an extra horse here, I shall reserve my story for by-and-by and take a short turn down the road."

"I have a poor sort of a beast here. He is scarcely a reasonable excuse for a horse, but perhaps he will serve," and he led the way to the stable.



Horacio shouldered the gun, after filling the magazine and his pockets with cartridges, and rode off down the trail in the direction of Sor André's plantation, expecting to meet his brothers on the way.

Much to his surprise he had ridden for an hour and a half without encountering anyone, when he came to a cross-roads and a cabin of thatch. Here he learned that a road led down to the river and noticed that the hoof-prints of Sor André's horse, which he had been following, turned off and followed the river-road.

Instantly he divined what the wealthy fazendeiro had planned to do, and turned his horse also toward the river. He had not gone a hundred meters, however, when he checked the horse and turned back.

"What use," said he to himself, "to follow a swift horse with an old crowbait like this? No, no! It is better to go on to his house and await his return. If he brings Anna with him, we shall square accounts there. If he misses her, as is more than likely, because of the long start she had, we shall settle the other score and be off."

Spurring his nearly worthless steed, he jogged along toward the fazenda and soon came out of the forest into a long open stretch of corn and pumpkins which led down to a stream upon which were built the various houses of the fazenda. Upon the farther side great meadows, or *invernadas*, stocked with fat cattle, extended to the distant forest-line.

Near the creek a saw-mill and a flour-mill, with other necessary concomitants of fazenda-life in the

sertão, formed a large gathering of scattered buildings. From the meadow-lands numerous slender palms, which remained after the ruthless destruction of the rich timber, thrust their graceful stems and waving crowns up into the morning breeze, before which they swayed like reeds. Horacio paused a moment in keen appreciation of the beauty of the scene, then slowly descended the long slope toward the house.

At the gate of the curral a horseman with a great coiled lariat in one hand and his whip in the other, urged on with word and gesture, and blows of lariat or lash, a bunch of cattle that were crowding through the open gate, while down the road beyond came galloping a remnant of the herd, with another horseman halloaing after them. Horacio knew that the man at the gate was his brother.

"Manoel!" he cried.

The rider turned his head and waved his hand to indicate that he would shortly return, then closed the gate after the cattle and dashed up the slope to aid his comrade. In another moment the remaining cattle came hurrying down to the gate which Horacio threw open for them to enter, and then closed behind them. He now saw, by their resemblance, that the two vaqueiros must be brothers, yet he could not be sure which was the one he had greeted nor whether he had greeted him aright.

The two young men paused at the gate and saluted him. "Good morning! How are you? Much obliged!"

"Not at all," replied their brother. "You are Manoel and José de Castro, are you not?"

"It is true," replied one of them. "What can we do for you?"

"I am Horacio de Castro, your brother. I have just come from our father's."

"Horacio!" cried the young men, in unison. "We thought that thou wert dead!"

"I am not dead, but very much alive, as you see. But I have business with you that cannot wait. Come,—an embrace—and explanations afterwards!"

The brothers approached, and, leaning from their saddles, embraced him warmly.

"Is Sor André here?" asked their older brother.

"No," answered José, with a sudden flush as he remembered something. "He has gone away to get mar—that is—on business. He will not be back, probably, until night."

"On the contrary, you may expect him at any moment. His business has mischanced." The younger men glanced at each other intelligently.

"Now, I have sharp business with Sor André. I want you to get ready to go with me at once."

"Virgem Nossa! Ready to go with thee! Senhora do Ceu! how can that be?"

"Never mind, but trust me and waste no time in words. Fetch me a good horse and I shall leave this food-for-ravens here. Be quick, now!"

In a few moments the two young men returned with three excellent horses and their own few belongings. At almost the same moment Sor André

came in sight, galloping down through the corn. His beautiful horse was flecked with foam and reeking with sweat, and the blackness of anger and disappointment lay heavily upon his evil face as he came in sight of the three young men at the gate. Horacio's rifle lay across the pommel of his saddle, ready to his hand.

"That is my horse you are riding!" shouted the fazendeiro, without saluting him.

"I will buy it," he replied, calmly.

"And I will not sell it," retorted the man, angrily. "You know what we do with horse-thieves hereabouts? It's short shrift they get! Dismount and turn him loose!"

"I am trying the horse to see if I like him," replied Horacio, amiably, and touched him with the spur, causing him to curvet about. "I like him," he added, with a smile, "and you will be glad to sell him before I am through with you. Don't do that!" he snapped out, as the fazendeiro made a movement to raise his rifle. "I am going away with my brothers. They want some horses and the balance of their wages. You can take the value of these three out of what you are owing them and call the balance a conto. Are you satisfied, boys?"

The two young men gazed at one another in astonishment. "Oh, yes, we're satisfied," they answered, with cheerful alacrity.

"But I'm not satisfied, curse you!" shouted the rich man, with a string of oaths. "This is blackmail and robbery!"

"Tut, tut! Softly! Those are not pretty names," answered his tormenter, with a steely glitter in his eye. "Where is my cousin, Anna?"

It was a random shot but the villain paled. Horacio saw it and his heart sank.

"I know naught of your cousin and I care less," replied Sor André. "Come,—what is it you will have? You are three against one, and might makes right."

"Nothing truer!" said his opponent, with a forced laugh. "You ought to know! How is he for capangas?" This last he whispered to his nearest brother.

"'Tis a holy day and they are all away. He has only kept the two of us at work."

"Let us go to the house," said Horacio, aloud. "Maneco—open the gate! Sor André, will you have the goodness to go first?" He motioned the fazendeiro to ride on. "Jose will relieve you of your gun: it is heavy to carry." His brother reached out and took the weapon, which was surrendered promptly, but with a muttered curse.

"We will go to your office. Never mind the coffee! Maneco—go ahead of Sor André to open the door!"

As they approached the house various female heads appeared at the windows to gaze curiously at the little procession and then turn away to exchange whispered surmises. Possibly the nature of the affair was suspected—without regret. At any rate, all dismounted and entered the office of Sor André without seeing any other signs of life about the place.

"Now, Sor André," said Horacio, as soon as they were seated, "we are somewhat pressed for time. We have gone over this matter once before, this morning—you and I—and we have concluded that the debt is discharged and a balance is due my father and brothers of, roughly speaking, about the value of the horses and a conto of reis. If this is satisfactory, please be so good as to acknowledge the discharge upon this document," and he drew the contract from his pocket and threw it on the table.

The fazendeiro stamped it and wrote the receipt. A strange willingness seemed to have suddenly taken possession of him. Horacio suspected the cause but meant to make it serve his ends.

"Now the balance due, if you please!" Sor André turned to a small safe and counted out the money.

"Now, boys,—give him receipts in full! He will not begrudge you a couple of stamps. What! You cannot write? Then hold this gun a moment—you, Maneco!—and I shall write it for you. All right! Now we are quits. Adeus, Sor André! Don't try any tricks or you will be sorry for it!"

He backed toward the door and covered his brothers' retreat. "You will find your gun at the edge of the wood, beyond the corn," he cried, as he mounted, and all three galloped across the curral and down the slope to the creek. Then they turned their horses' heads towards home.

"Why did he turn pale when I spoke of Anna?" was the thought of which Horacio could not rid himself as they hurried back to their parents. "What

has he done with Anna?" The question was destined to be resolved that night.

A little more than an hour after leaving the fazenda of Sor André, the three young men dashed up to their father's door. Horacio had partially satisfied his brothers' curiosity on the way, and was resolved on the course which he must now follow. He already suspected that Sor André had consented to his just exaction with alacrity in the hope of recovering in full, with a seasoning of revenge. A few hours would suffice to gather in his faithful capangas—the instruments of his many lawless acts—and those who had triumphed for the moment might then hope to hear from him.

There was practically nothing of any value upon the place and Horacio was determined to emigrate at the first edge of the night. To do this successfully was not as easy as would at first sight appear, and would require some little maneuvering. There were before them several days of journeying, encumbered by women, through a country that would not dare to succor them nor could hope to attempt it successfully.

It was now three o'clock, and after, and Sor André could hardly reach them ere nightfall. In a few words the young man explained the situation, handed the money and the contract to his father, and set them all to work getting ready for the exodus.

"Do not destroy that contract, my father," he said, "for the land is thine now, and some day it will be worth money. Now, let us get together what we can



take with us. The girls and mother shall ride and the rest of us must walk. At dark we must leave the house shut-up—as though we had gone to bed—and retire with the horses to the far edge of the clearing. The pigs and chickens we must leave to the hospitality of the forest. Let us turn them out or they will perish in the flames.”

“The flames! What flames?” asked his sisters, at the same instant.

“You will see when the time comes. ‘There is no egg without a hen.’ Run along and get your duds together!”

The preparation for departure went on rapidly, while Horacio or one of his brothers kept a sharp watch on the road but saw no one save the caboclo who had been with Horacio, and who brought them the news of Father João’s death and thus removed Horacio’s last scruple in carrying out his plan.

As the shadows began to fall, the entire family and their possessions were collected in the center of a small open space in the edge of the forest, beyond the clearing, while Horacio remained in hiding near the house.

As yet the family could not see why he delayed the departure, for he might have been on the road these three hours ago, if necessary. They were soon to see what was the explanation of his conduct, for they had not been in hiding much more than an hour before they heard the distant approach of horses. As it drew nearer, the sound suddenly ceased and, presently, one of the boys reported that a dozen arm-

ed men with large bundles were quietly approaching on foot and surrounding the house.

They could get no further news of their movements for some time, but Horacio, as he lay in hiding close by, saw Sor André approach him in company with another man with whom he was in earnest conversation. Pretty soon the men began to place their bundles against the house and retire again to the brush. When they had all disappeared, the man who was with Sor André brought a can of oil and visited each bundle, pouring what was left upon the doorstep. He then returned to his former position near Sor André and both men made ready their guns. Sor André himself now lit a ball of cotton, soaked with oil, and cast it at the doorstep. Instantly the house burst into a sheet of flame.

"Ready, men! Let them have it when they run for it! Pull them out of the flames when they fall! I'll save my money if I can, but the festa is worth the fiddler in any case," he shouted.

All the men now rose to their feet and chose advantageous positions. The fire roared and lit the scene so that Horacio must have been discovered had they chanced to look behind them. He shuddered to think what must have been their fate had they chosen to spend another night in the house, and his finger itched as it rested on the trigger of his rifle. Scarcely could he conquer his longing to draw a bead on the author of this barbarity, as he stood like a silhouette against the burning house. Wisdom and his religion counselled forbearance and he slow-

ly wormed his way back into the shadow.

"Curse them! I believe they have skipped," shouted the fazendeiro, at last, as the roof began to fall in on the doubling walls and the place gave no sign of life. "Let us get after them down the road! They have fooled us again and we have had all our trouble for nothing. At any rate, I'm square with the hussy—curse her! The Tieté fixed her!"

The blow fell on Horacio with stunning force. Slowly he raised his rifle to his shoulder and glanced along the sights which the flickering flames illuminated. For the fraction of a second Sor André drew nearer to the reward of his evil deeds than he had ever fared before. The thought of the dozen armed capangas who would be left to fall upon his helpless family, and the memory of that group of feeble women in the forest yonder, made the marksman pause. In another moment his enemies had withdrawn and were hurrying to their horses.

Horacio ran back to the little, huddled group of refugees. "Muffle the horses!" he cried. "Cover their ears, eyes and nostrils; only give them air to breathe; or they will betray us."

Personally he superintended the work, and then all kept quiet while the cavalcade of ruffians came toward them and passed along the road. The muffled whinny of one of the horses was drowned by the clatter of hoofs, but two of those that were galloping by, threw up their heads and nickered as they passed. Fortunately the riders took it that their horses scented others ahead, so they spurred forward and

soon the sound of hoofs was lost on the night air.

Horacio now collected his little band and set them in motion toward Sor André's house.

"What is this madness, Horacio?" asked his father, who was filled with misgivings.

"Nothing of madness, father. Nothing of madness, but everything of wisdom. We have no hope in the direction they have taken. We must gain the river by the other road: it is shorter and our only hope to reach Conceição. If we were to work our way to Lençóis and São Manoel, we should be overtaken long ere we came to safety. No, no! This is our only chance."

In silence the little company made its way back to the cross-roads and then down towards the river. Morning was breaking over the tree-tops when at last they found themselves still a half a league from the ferry. Rain was falling heavily and caused them great discomfort, but at the same time it obliterated their tracks and added to their safety.

Suddenly Manoel, who had been kept a little distance in the lead as a sort of scout, came running back to tell them that the enemy was approaching from the river. Horacio turned his company aside, into the forest, and soon had them hidden from the road. He then returned to see who might pass and discovered that Sor André was returning with six of his capangas.

"Exactly!" he said to himself. "You have left six men to take care of the other road, after learning that we have not crossed the ferry, or else six

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remain at the ferry. Alas for us, if this be the case ! ”

The cavalcade passed ; cūrsing at the rain ; cursing at Horacio ; cursing at the old man, and cursing at things in general. When they had been lost to sight and sound for full thirty minutes, Horacio emerged from the forest, and, sending out a scout in advance, as before, went on toward the river, splashing through the slippery mud as best they could. Suddenly the sound of a galloping horse came close behind. The young man turned and looked back to see the fazendeiro bearing down on them alone, around a bend of the road.

Instantly, at sight of the little party and Horacio walking in the rear with ready rifle, he checked his horse so quickly that he sat upon his haunches and slid through the red mud. With a sharp jerk of the reins he brought the animal about and spurred him in retreat.

“ If I let him return we are lost ! I would it were the rider and not the gallant beast who has done no harm to anyone ! Why should I spare the man who has wrought this evil, and slay the noble animal that bears him away ? ”

As these thoughts flitted through his brain he dis-embarrassed himself in an instant of his saddle-bags, which he was carrying, and brought his rifle to bear on the retreating forms. In another instant they would have disappeared from view and it would have been too late. A sharp report rang out, as the horse turned at the angle of the road, and, with a great crash, horse and rider fell in the mud.

A bullet had passed through the horse's neck. Sor André lay prone where he had fallen and for a moment Horacio thought that he had killed him. A pang of remorse shot through him and he ran to the side of his fallen foe. The splendid horse was stone-dead and his rider lay beneath him, groaning. With the aid of his brothers, who had come to assist him, the young man drew the body of the horse from its master and set the man upon his feet, only to find that one leg hung limply beneath him. Sor André gave a scream of pain and fainted away, so the young man laid him on the ground with his back against a tree.

"What shall we do now?" asked Maneco. "If we stay to care for him we shall have his capangas here as soon as they miss him, and shall lose our lives."

"Would they injure those who were caring for their master? I cannot bear to leave him like this."

"Ay, that they would! Thou dost not know them."

The fazendeiro opened his eyes and groaned again with returning consciousness.

"Say, Sor André!" said Horacio. "I am going for help. If I leave you here, you will die. When I fetch your capangas here you may bid them kill me, but let my people go! Do you hear?"

The fazendeiro looked at him intently for a moment. "Yes, I hear. They shall go free."

Horacio shut his ears to his brothers' remonstrances and bade them conduct the family to the ferry and start across at once. He then mounted one of the horses to go to the fazenda for aid, but, as he pass-

ed the injured man, he called to him in a feeble voice. Horacio paused and waited to hear what he would say.

"Young man," said the fazendeiro, with a touch of bitterness, "I have played and lost. The girl is drowned. I tried to stop her but she would not hear. You have had me at your mercy and yet you have spared me. Now, turn back to the ferry and take my whip to Antonio, who has half my men waiting for you there, in ambush."

"In ambush!" cried the colporteur. "Then they will shoot at me ere I can deliver your message."

"Not so," replied the wounded man, between groans. "As you pass the pao d'alho on the hither side of the clearing, whistle three times. Antonio will come out to meet you. Give him my whip and bid him come to me with the men. You are free to go. Make haste and clear out of here, lest I repent!"

"May God forgive you!—and aid me to do the same. Adeus!" and Horacio galloped after the others and restored the horse to his sister, acquainting them with what had passed.

In a quarter of an hour they came in sight of the great pao d'alho and Horacio advanced to the front to whistle three times, as he had been instructed.

A moment later a sturdy caboclo stepped out into the middle of the road and Horacio trembled as he thought what would have been their fate had he not offered to go for Sor André's men. Holding up the whip toward the astonished capanga, the young man went boldly out to meet him.

"Sor Antonio!" he cried. "A message from Sor



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André! You know the whip?"

"Yes, I know the whip. What is it you want?"

"Sor André lies at the turn of the road, with a broken leg. He bade me tell you to go to him, and, by this token—let us pass freely."

"Did he send no written word?" asked the capanga, sullenly.

"No. He sent nothing but the message and the token, and bade me whistle thrice. You must know the sign."

"Maybe I know the sign and maybe not, but what if I do not choose to let you pass?"

"Then you will have to settle with Sor André—afterwards, and with me—now!"

"Pooh! I have you covered with five guns, loaded with buckshot. If I say the word you will not take one step."

"Nonsense, Sor Antonio! You have no quarrel with me."

"No, I have no quarrel, but what is to prevent me from throwing you all into the Tieté and keeping the boss's money?"

A cold chill crept through Horacio's veins as the fiendish proposition was revealed to him, and he could not help but think how easily it could be done. Then he shrugged his shoulders and answered, indifferently: "Do as you will! God alone can stop you; but you yourself will certainly die—for my rifle is now pointing at your heart, in my brother's hands, and should anything happen to me——"

"I was joking," said the capanga, laughing uneas-

ily. "Pass, then, all of you! Quickly!"

"Not so! I shall retire to my people, and you are to pass. When you are gone, then we shall proceed."

"As you please—but be quick about it!"

Horacio retired at once and made his company enter the woods and conceal themselves. A moment later the six horsemen passed at full gallop, with a great splashing of mud.

"Now haste, my father! Haste, my brothers! We must improve our time or we may yet be lost. To the ferry!"

They pushed forward on the run and hastened down to the ferry, which they found just ready to return to the farther side. Embarking immediately, the swift current soon bore them across.

"Look here, my friend," said Horacio to the ferryman, as he paid for their passage and showed him a note of twenty milreis; "how much do you gain in a day, at this business?"

"Oh, sometimes ten—fifteen—twenty milreis, and sometimes—nothing."

"Well—will you take this and come along with us to show us the way? Let your freguezes wait a day or go somewhere else to get across."

The ferryman hesitated but kept his eye covetously upon the money. "Perhaps I can direct you just as well from here?" he suggested.

"No, that would not do. Look here! I'll be frank with you. I want to get to Conceição before a neighbor of mine. There's a little deal coming off, you see! Now, just be away from the ferry for three

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or four hours and you shall have this note."

The man's face brightened and he held out his hand for the money. He had been absent at the festa all the previous day, but three or four hours only meant a half-day more, for it was early yet.

"I can do that," he said, promptly, closing his fingers over the note which Horacio relinquished to him.

"But, mind you!" said Horacio, as he let go of it, and giving him a significant look; "if my neighbor gets across before noon, when I come back I shall accidentally shoot at a deer along the bank here, in such a way that—you understand? They say that if one pays in advance he is poorly served, but I—never miss!"

"All right! All right! Never fear! The neighbor shall not cross. Enough said," and he turned away to his cabin, while Horacio followed his little band of refugees, like one walking in a dream.

The eyes of his heart were blind with grief as he looked upon the cruel waters of the Tieté, but no tear was visible to those who stood near him. For the moment his life was to be wholly theirs and he would not think of anything beside.

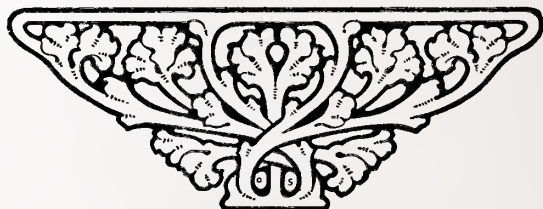
It is needless to follow the family on their long and painful journey to their old home, for it was thither that Horacio had planned to lead them and there he had planned to establish them. Now that Padre João was dead, there was nothing to fear.

Six days after leaving the ferry they reached the once familiar spot in safety, and camped where the

old house had stood.

With tools which they had purchased on the way, they set about clearing the place and putting up the frame of the house again. Many tiles lay about and could be used again for the roof; and what were lacking were brought in in carts over the old road, now so long untravelled, but cleared and repaired by the young men for this purpose.

When the house had been roofed over and was rendered partially habitable, they turned their attention to the coffee, which had long been overgrown with jungle. For the remaining three weeks of Horacio's vacation they cleared the brush from between the rows and found, to their surprise, that many of the trees had a small crop of coffee upon them. It is true that many had died and many more were sadly dwarfed by neglect and the encroaching of the jungle, but those that remained would bear enough to tide the family over the first year.





## 14

### THE SEMINARY.



URING the last week in January Horacio set out upon his return, accompanied by José, who would bring back the horses, and, a few days later, having sold his remaining books along the way, he stepped off the train in the great station at São Paulo.

So busy had been his days and full of cares, that it was not until he had embraced Zézinho in parting at Lençóes, and the train had rolled out of the station, that he had felt the shock of his loss in all its real significance.

Now, on his long journey to the City, it seemed to him, as once before in the deserted clearing where he had sought the home of his childhood, that he had come to the edge of things and was looking over. Not even the blessed responsibility of his High

Calling could drag him from this state of mental and spiritual apathy. To find Anna and then to lose her! If he had only kept her, and not sent her away by night, she would still have been living!

Then his heart burned with a fierce desire for revenge and he regretted that he had spared his prostrate foe—her cruel persecutor—and, for a few moments, he planned a stealthy return to Sor André's, to square accounts.

At São Manoel, fortunately, a couple of school-mates entered the car and diverted his thoughts, keeping them occupied until he reached São Paulo. Here they pushed their way through the too eager throng of white-jacketed carregadores with big, black numbers on their breasts, who disputed noisily for the privilege of carrying their luggage; and climbed on the electric bond which would take them to the Seminary.

As they whirled through the busy City, the last two months with their stirring incidents, worthy of a past century, seemed like a dream. Was it really true that he now had a father and a mother of whom to think and for whom to plan? What had he accomplished by the Scripture-reading, prayer and singing to which they had unwillingly listened each night, in the new home, only to please him?

At the Square he changed to a bond with green lights, and was borne swiftly to the higher part of the City, where the College and Seminary stood. In a few moments he reached the place; ran up the gravelled walk, and mounted the steps of the Semi-

nary—a student again.

The American Rector received him smilingly, although he himself was a stranger, for the former Rector had died and his place was taken by a missionary from another part of Brazil.

The young man took his bag to his new room and found the trunk which had been sent over from the College, already waiting for him. His life as a theological student had commenced, and was to be marked by many new experiences.

The wife of the new Rector sat at the head of the table, for they felt that the young men lacked a certain training which they could never get without personal contact and a bit of feminine society which could never be provided for them by outside residents. Accordingly, all thought of an independent home had been bravely abandoned and they were come to live with their boys.

So Mrs. Wallace, a charming little woman, presided at the table. At her left sat Aunt Carrie, a dear little old lady, who could teach the boys Greek or Mathematics, and who had been doing it all her sweet, serene life long. On the right sat the Rector and his little, old-fashioned daughter. At the other end of the table was one of the Brazilian professors with his young wife, and the sides of the long table were filled with students.

They were not many but they came from all parts of the great country. Most of them, like Horacio, were "charity boys", and few there were that came from families of any means. Here was one from



the distant State of Amazonas—a typical equatorial native. By his side was a tall, handsome fellow from the South: next to him a Pernambuco mulatto showed his teeth in a constant, cheery smile. He had served four years in the regular army, after running away from an unhappy marriage, and is now a widower. Happy José! In a childlike Christian faith he has found peace.

Next to the Pernambucan was a slender and well-groomed lad from the City itself—the only “man-of-means” among them all. Beside him sat a school-teacher’s son. His father was earning twenty-five dollars a month and boarding himself. His mother was cooking on a fazenda to support her little daughter and herself. Next to him was a fazendeiro’s son, and thus the list might be filled. Most of the boys were in earnest, but at least a few of them were “rice Christians”.

Here is the son of a well-to-do merchant of the interior, who, after giving three or four hundred mil-reis to the support of the Seminary, expects to keep his son upon the free-list and has already received a conto for his education. His money from home is spent for gaudy scarfs, diamonds and “yellow-back” translations of putrid French. He will soon be erased from the free-list and perhaps be cut off altogether from the school.

On the other hand, the young man whose father is a school-teacher is given to drawing the long bow. He borrows money which he cannot pay and brags of the great fazenda which his father owns, and of

his dogs and horses. The money which he borrows, and what little his people can send him, goes for clothes. He is proud! The Committee of Presbytery is about to send for him to enquire why he is on the free-list if his father is a wealthy fazendeiro.

The orator of the Seminary is also here. He is chosen as the official spokesman on all state occasions. You can see it as he eats. The food approaches his mouth in a majestic wave. His head is thrown back to receive it, as when uttering a lofty period. He is not at the head of his classes, but he can pour out seven-syllabled words like the flow of a river, without even the necessity for a subject—or an idea—to his discourse. He is a good fellow, but a little vain, perhaps.

Almost without exception these boys are guiltless of home-training, table-manners and all the little refinements of life. A pulpit-lecture on these things, once a month, or even once a week, will not do: for one might as well give a degree to a donkey loaded with books as attempt to make ministers with theology alone. The Rector grasps this truth, and, heaving a hastily-checked sigh, takes up his abode with them and invites little Professor Monteiro to assist him. This dear little man is, as Aunt Carrie says, an amalgamation of Lord Macaulay and Little Lord Fauntleroy, and will be a staff to lean upon, for he is not an alien, but their own blood.

Horacio is to thank the memory of these kind friends many times in the days to come for this now but slightly appreciated sacrifice which they have

made in his behalf and in the behalf of these others. A minister needs more than theology—as has been said—and he needs more than theology and polish, although the latter helps. He even needs more than these two and love,—he needs common sense!

The boys were to have a glimpse of all these things, and it was a precious jewel in a deep mine, where they were to delve.

A month went by in the new life—this life of subduing boisterousness, of slowly permeating refinement, of gradually developing thoughtfulness. Horacio had made his report to the Presbytery and was now on the way to the Minister's to receive his monthly allowance. A rumor had come to his ears of clouds on the horizon and he was not altogether easy in his mind as he ran up the steps and clapped his hands at the door.

The Minister himself opened and bade him enter. When he had shaken hands with the family, Senhor Camargo drew him aside into the study and handed him his allowance.

"Sit down, my young friend,—sit down!" he said, drawing forward a chair for Horacio, and seating himself at his desk. "We are come upon bad times, I fear." He laughed nervously and continued: "I have bad news for you. Our treasury is empty! Worse than that, indeed, for we have to find some interest money which must be paid or else the mortgage on the building will be foreclosed. I am sorry, but we must hope for better times. Perhaps next year——"

"Then I must go back to the sertão!" exclaimed the student, with a queer grasping sensation in his throat.

"No, no! Perhaps not. We can give you board and lodging and you have a little money from your journey, have you not?"

"Yes,—I have sixty milreis and with that and the thirty you have just given me I can get along for some time—except for the books. I have a large bill for new books which I must pay."

"Let that go for the present. You are doing good work. If you desire to risk it and go on, I can arrange for you to pay that later. Perhaps we can continue to help you in a few months. At any rate, although you are free to go home if you desire, I earnestly advise you to remain, especially as you have no people who need you."

"I have found my people, sir! They are well—that is—yes, they are well, all well."

Horacio scarcely heard the Minister's exclamations of surprise and cordial congratulations. His memory reverted to the incidents of his vacation-trip. "I sent her away! I sent her away!" he kept saying to himself, and then, in his hour of financial need, he remembered the bulky package which he had left in her care, and of which he had not thought before, and was angry with himself for remembering. The Minister's repeated question brought him to himself.

"How did you find your people?" he was asking. Horacio gave a partial explanation and arose to go.

"My people do need me," he said, with a note of

regret. "Perhaps it is God's will that I shall go to them?"

"Well,—think and pray over it and let me know what your decision is."

"Yes, sir. I shall do so and let you know to-morrow. Thank you! Até amanhã!"

"Até amanhã! Passar bem!"

The young man went slowly down the street with a gloomy face and a gloomy heart. Why did all his business suffer reverses, when he was in the path of duty? There was Anna—alas!—perhaps she had been in the way and, because of this, was providentially removed. He had not thought of that, before. Then the money that was stolen in the jail—which, in truth, he had almost forgotten; the money which must have gone down the river with the girl, and, now, the help which had been promised by the Presbytery! Should he go forward or go back?

A group of children blocked his way, with shouts and laughter. He stepped off the narrow sidewalk, in order to pass them, and paused to see what they were doing. For a moment he could not make it out and then, in an instant, he divined it.

Two little Italian girls stood on the walk, gravely turning an imaginary skipping-rope. Between them another was hopping and dodging the rope with her head. A fourth "ran in" and hopped a moment, then tripped on the rope. The other gave her an outraged look and a push, and complained impatiently of her awkwardness. Both stepped aside, out of the way, in order that the rope might swing again, and

the whole group burst into a shout of laughter. Horacio laughed, too. Here was faith, indeed—the evidence of things not seen. There was no rope, to be sure; but there was the good-will, and—who knows?—perhaps the rope might materialize.

Horacio stepped into a “loja de ferragens”, hard by, and became their providence. A yell of delight went up and the student turned away with a smile and a fresh bit of courage for himself.

That night there was to be a special function at the Seminary. The Rector and his little lady, as has been said, believed in the humanizing influence of ladies’ society. Once a month there were to be games, sweets and tea, and a bunch of girls from the school to help. Each student was privileged to mention one young lady’s name, and then the Principal of the Girls’ School might add a few more names to the list.

’Twas a sight worth remembering to see how the courage oozed out of these valiant hearts as they faced the battery. Even the state-orator turned pale. Finally, the big young man from the South, with a great blush and in a trembling voice, uttered the name of one of the teachers, down below.

“Very good! Now we have a beginning. Who will be next?”

The young man of the diamonds rashly gasped out the name of a popular divinity. A dozen pairs of indignant eyes were turned upon him like so many rapid-fire guns, for having dared to do what all the rest were longing to do; then a giggle ran around.

“Come, young gentlemen! Can’t you remember

their names? That only makes two. You stare at them enough in chapel, at the College, I've been told. I shall say them over and you can let me know if you want them. There is Donna Clara—and Donna Brigida—and Donna Cocotta, and—that's right!—now the list is filling up!"

Thus the adroit little lady managed to screw out of their bashful admirers a list of the fair students who were to be asked to the reception, and sent it down to the School. Such a primping and fussing before cracked and blistered glasses was never seen before, I warrant, even in a young ladies' seminary, but among grave theologues it verged on scandal. What a brushing of best coats and straightening of ties! What a twisting of immature moustaches! Oh, if only the girls could have seen them! Naturally, the girls did nothing of a similar sort themselves, and, if they did—why, that is their privilege!

Horacio hardly knew what to make of the commotion but suffered himself to be drawn with the current, and, laying his books aside, spruced up as well as he might, for the occasion.

And now there was a great grouping about the doors, and a wringing of nervous hands, and a fresh twisting of immature moustaches. At last the green lights of the bond could be seen, rapidly rushing up the slope, and the scouts that peeked from the Seminary-door sighted a bevy of girls in festive attire, in the car.

Such fortitude and valor as would have been required to enable them to step forth and assist the



fair ones to alight from the bond, was not to be expected. Besides, gentlemen do not, as a rule, help ladies from bonds in Brazil. For some occult reason it is not the mode.

In another moment a mass of white and pink and blue and cream, set with such jewels as dancing blue and black eyes, fluttered up the stone steps, marshalled and headed by Miss Holland, and disappeared in a class-room, after a triumphal progress between two files of quite-overwhelmed young men.

Presently they emerged again and now there was a tremendous hand-shaking, for everybody must needs shake hands with everybody else, and that made some four hundred friendly hand-clasps and four hundred cordial phrases of greeting, all in a minute or so.

A circle of chairs stood about the largest room of the Seminary, close against the wall. To these all dutifully betook themselves as soon as the salutations were completed and the young ladies carefully ranged themselves in an unbroken line on one side while the theologues took the other.

Now this was not at all to the mind of the little mistress-of-ceremonies, so around the room she went, with forefinger uplifted, counting and nodding, merrily and emphatically: "Um, dous, tres, quatro, cinco! You are "cinco"! All right! Seis, sete, oito, nove, dez! Just go on, counting around! That's right! Now begin again and do it all over, so you won't forget. Very well! I am going to stand in the middle of the room with this old tray, and spin it as I call a number. The 'number' must catch the tray

or be 'it'. Now then—ready! Here you go! Twenty-seven!”

The little lady twirled the tray and Twenty-seven, who was the Rector, caught it ere it lay flat on the floor. A shout of appreciative laughter went up. It was new but it was “dead easy”.

“Twelve!” the little lady called, ere the laughter subsided, and Twelve was “it”. The fun grew fast and furious, and, when the game was suddenly checked in twenty minutes, the battalion-like formation, which had prevailed, was smashed into smithereens.

For a few moments they were permitted to catch their breath and get a little better acquainted, but their opportunity for conversation did not last very long before their hostess stepped into the middle of the room and clapped her hands for silence.

“Now we shall play ‘Escoba’,” announced the mistress-of-ceremonies, and, as there are too many for one ring, we shall form two. Here, my dear—you fix up the other and I shall attend to this one!”

The young people were quickly marshalled upon the floor and formed in two circles, within each of which someone was “it”. At this moment Horacio, who had clung to his books until the noise prevented him from longer making good use of his time, descended the stairs and entered the room. At the same instant Mrs. Wallace espied him.

“Oh, Senhor Horacio! That is very naughty! You must do penance. Come here and be ‘it’!”

She resigned her own place in the center of the circle and pushed him into it. “Now, tell us who

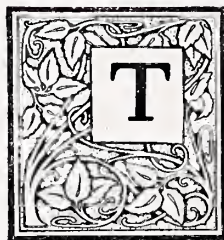
has the brush!"

The brush, which was in somebody's hand, was suddenly rubbed over the back of Horacio's coat and as quickly disappeared from sight. When he turned, he saw no brush, but there, looking him full in the eyes, was Anna!





## THE RIVER.



HE night that Horacio found his parents again, after so many years, Anna had set forth on Bonito, in accordance with his instructions, to make her way toward Conceição. Knowing that it would avail her nothing to reach the Tieté before daybreak, she did not hurry, and thus she hoped to spare Bonito for a hard ride when once she was across the river.

Strange sounds came from the forest, as she rode through the night, and small creatures of various sorts scurried across her path. Sometimes it was only a tatú or cutia, but once and again some larger animal plunged heavily into the brush, and awakened a momentary flutter in the young woman's breast. The forest was, indeed, dark and fearsome, but Anna was a child of the sertão and well-used to all its

peculiarities. Naturally courageous, at all times, she now felt an additional throb of courage each time that she reached out and laid her hand gently on Bonito's neck—Horacio's horse—and remembered that ride of long ago, and who had sent her on this one.

In her bosom nestled the package of money and the letter, and from time to time she pressed her hand upon them to assure herself of their safety, just as she had done that night of their flight from the old home, when she was saving the money for Horacio.

She reached the ferry just as it began to grow light. The cabin of the ferryman was built upon the farther side, and at that end of the great steel cable lay the ferry-boat also. There was no sign of movement about the house, that she could see, and Anna called until her voice failed her, without arousing the ferryman, who, if the truth must be told, was off to a festa at Conceição, leaving his patrons to curse and wait or hunt some other ferry, leagues away.

Anna did not, of course, know this or she would have spared her voice and sought some other means to get across.

The hours went slowly by and it must have been about ten o'clock when she heard the rapid approach of hoofs. A sudden premonition of danger caused her to mount upon Bonito. She looked up the river and down the river in search of a road, other than the one which had brought her, and upon which the rapid beat of hoofs was now sounding nearer and nearer.

The river banks were heavily wooded to the water's edge, and the road which led down to the ferry came to an abrupt end at the brink of the flood. The first rains of winter had already swollen the stream to a turbid and sullen volume, which drifted lazily along with a deceptive appearance of sluggishness, which was only contradicted by the velocity with which scum and drift passed a given point upon the shore.

Anna gazed at the stream and then back at the wood, and knew not why this deathly terror seized her. The rider rapidly approached and, dashing out into plain view, drew rein in front of the bit of thatched shelter which the ferryman had erected upon the bank. Instantly Anna recognized Sor André and at the same moment the fazendeiro espied the girl upon the edge of the abrupt slope which led down to the water. With an exclamation of satisfaction he struck his horse sharply with his silver-mounted chicote and thrust his spurs into its side.

'Twas well, perhaps, that he gave her no time to think. With a half-gasp, half-scream, she drew hard on Bonito's reins and struck him with their long loose ends. The old horse seemed to know that the times were perilous, for he gave one mighty leap out into the flood, striking the muddy water with a great splash.

In an instant he rose again to the surface, with his brave rider still firmly fixed in the saddle, to which she clung with both hands in superhuman desperation. Bonito stretched his long neck out of the

water and, blowing spray from his nostrils, strained his eyes toward the other shore, to search out a landing on the farther side.

When her first terror had passed and she had recovered a little confidence, Anna gathered up the reins quickly with one hand, and, setting her strong white teeth in the leather, drew Bonito's head well up against the current, hoping to make the ferry-landing on the other side of the river.

"Turn back! Turn back! Do you want to be drowned?" cried Sor André, from the bank.

His voice came faintly to her ears, over the rushing water, and seemed to belong to another world and another time. The girl did not even turn her head to see what her enemy was doing but anxiously followed every movement of the faithful horse which bore her, perhaps to death, but certainly out of the power of the fazendeiro. The water dragged at her floating garments, and, had they not been light and scanty, must surely have drawn her down.

Bonito fought his way steadily onward, but the trees upon the shore flew past and soon the ferry-landings and Anna's watching foe had altogether disappeared from view. The strong current was rapidly sweeping horse and rider to the opposite shore, but the girl now saw to her dismay, that the bank was precipitous and crowned with heavy brush and forest growth. The horse, too, seemed to comprehend the new peril of their situation and, having lifted himself by a supreme effort, high out of water, and turned his head from side to side to see what



hope there was, drew the reins from Anna's teeth with a sharp jerk and turned well about, swimming straight down with the current.

The trees now flew past with greatly increased rapidity and Anna noticed with keen anxiety that Bonito's breathing was becoming very labored, that he swam heavily and with great effort, and still the vertical banks stared her in the face. 'Twas evident that in a few moments the brave animal must give up the fight. The girl commenced to loosen her skirt, in order that she might drop it down over her feet and swim for her life. Suddenly they swept into view of the outlet of a small stream which flowed into the main river. The angle of the bank at its mouth sloped down to the Tieté, and, if they could reach it, it would mean safety to horse and rider.

"Bonito!" cried the girl, in sudden exultation, and pointed with her hand. With a snort of hope the intelligent horse struggled toward the narrow point, and Anna, to aid him, slipped from the saddle and clung to it with one hand, swimming vigorously with the other. Thus lightened, Bonito made the point and scrambled upon it, only to sink to his saddle-girths in soft and sticky mud. The girl gained firmer ground above him and stood there, wringing her hands as she looked down upon the noble friend who had brought her safe over the flood.

Bonito lay exhausted upon the mud, his heaving sides and distended nostrils telling how gallant had been the battle and how nearly he was spent.

"Oh, Bonito, Bonito!" cried Anna, "what shall

we do?"

The horse turned his protruding eyes sadly upon her and whinnied in a sort of whimper. The girl caught his rein, and, bracing herself firmly against a root, pulled with all her might, and encouraged the poor old horse with cheery words to struggle out of his miry bed. Bonito plunged and threshed about, but only wearied himself and gained no advantage. Now, at last, Anna's courage gave way.

"What will Horacio say?" she cried, and, dropping upon the ground, sobbed bitterly. Bonito whinnied again, as if to say: "Never mind, dear heart! Leave an old horse to die, and go on your way. My love to Horacio! Tell him that I was faithful!"

"Coitado!" cried the girl, at the sound of the feeble whinny, which she seemed to read and understand. "Thou shalt not die! Only hold on while I seek help!"

She turned and, struggling to her feet, began to make her way up the bank, when a splash of paddles came to her ears and a canoe whirled swiftly down the small river.

"Oh, help me save my horse!" she cried. "For the love of the Saints—help me!"

The men in the canoe brought their unstable craft about with a sweep of their paddles, and approached the bank.

"Ohé!" said one of them, gazing in astonishment at the horse and the girl. "How did he come here?"

"I swam the river with him and now he will die if you do not help. Oh, please, pull him out! The

good horse!" and a sob trembled in her voice. Bonito turned his tired head toward the canoe and whinnied again, with a note of hope.

The man looked at his companions. "That is not very easy," he said, doubtfully, "for we have no ropes."

"Here is a lariat, at his saddle!" answered the girl, quickly. "Oh, do not delay but help him out! He is weary and will die."

"Well,—quem sabe? We shall see. Vamos, compadres, and lend a hand!"

The men piled out of the canoe and moored it to a sapling. In a few moments they had burrowed with the paddles and their hands into the mud beneath the horse and had passed the rope several times under his body. Then all four pulled, while Anna clung to the reins and called to the horse in tender entreaty.

"Now,—all together!" shouted the men, and Bonito struggled half out of the mire. "Now,—once more! All together!"

The men pulled and the horse plunged and got up on his knees. A moment more and he stumbled up the bank and stood with trembling limbs and heaving sides upon the firm and level ground.

"There, old horse!" said the man who had first spoken, "the crows will not pick thy bones to-day, so praise God! How didst thou come to cross the stream, girl? Didst thou hope to ford it in time of freshet, when there is two meters over the shoals at lowest water?"

"No," said the girl, hesitating to tell the truth, "I found the ferry deserted and must needs cross for a matter of life and death. I thought not that the current was so strong. How can I thank you for your help? May the Virgin reward you!"

"Ah, that is nothing. So that old vagabond José, of the ferry, has gone off to the festa at Conceição! I wish he were in the Tieté, himself—good riddance! Well, there is a trail a bit further along, which leads to the road: it is not far. May it go well with thee! So long!"

"So long, and God go with you!"

The men took their places in the canoe again and pushed off into the stream. In another moment they were lost to sight, while Anna sat upon a stump and waited for Bonito to recover somewhat from his wonderful effort. After about half an hour she took his reins in her hand and set out on foot along the narrow trail toward the main road, where she washed the animal at a small correjo and rubbed him down with dry banana leaves. It was now about two o'clock and she must be on her way and waste no time if she would reach Conceição before night.

For about two hours she walked as rapidly as she could and then halted to purchase a feed of corn for Bonito and a mouthful of something for herself. An hour later she mounted and rode slowly toward the town, which she reached a little after nightfall, weary and hungry.

At Conceição she had friends and found hospitable entertainment and a change of clothing, with a chance

to dry the little bundle she had brought with her and the dress that she had worn. The next day she pushed on toward Jahú, and there she left Bonito with his owner and took the train for São Paulo.





## THE MINISTER.



ORACIO stood, facing Anna, but after the first flash of recognition, he doubted whether his eyes had served him well. How changed she was! The girl that had parted with him such a short time before, clad in a shabby calico dress, wan and sallow and worn, was now very becomingly dressed in a pretty, but inexpensive, gown. Her face and figure were rounded with wholesome living and her great dark eyes shone with a new light.

Was this the prematurely-aged young girl whom he had last seen in his father's house?

Here was the fast-approaching fulfilment of all the promise of beauty which her younger years had given! For a moment he knew her and then he did not know her. How could it be?

Mrs. Wallace was gazing at him curiously. The

circle had stopped for a moment and then moved on again. Anna flushed but did not speak. Someone rubbed his back with the brush again, and he spun around to catch him. No brush was in sight and the circle took up their march. The next time, however, he was quicker and caught the holder of the brush. Taking the victim's place, his hand closed firmly on Anna's soft palm.

"Is it really thou, Anna?" he whispered.

"Yes, of course, but you need not stare at me so," she answered, and held her head proudly, half in vexation and half in satisfaction at the evident sensation she was creating.

The brush was thrust into his hand by his neighbor on the other side and he passed it at once to Anna, who was discovered with it in her possession. A few moments later the circle broke up, and shortly afterwards Miss Holland came to him and shook hands.

"Why have you not been to see us, Senhor Horacio?" she enquired. "Your cousin arrived safely and brought your letter. I bought her what she needed and put the rest of the money in the Savings Bank. Dr. Street has made her a special rate, so the money will do for her in abundance for at least two years. She is to help with the little folks, in order to justify the reduced rate."

"Thank you! You are very kind. I did not go to see you because I did not know—that is—I have been very busy, but I shall go there soon. Is she contented?"



"I think so. She has improved much, already, and yet she does not seem altogether happy. Perhaps it is because she has received no news of her people."

"I shall go down, then, to-morrow, if you permit, and tell her all about them."

"Very well. We shall be glad to see you. Bring one of your companions, if you like."

Mrs. Wallace beckoned and called to Horacio to help pass the tea and cake. When he was through with this duty, Anna was sitting between two other girls and seemed to avoid catching his eye.

When they had all gone, gladness and chagrin together teased him out of an hour of study and several hours of sleep. He was burning with curiosity to have an explanation of the mystery—the double mystery of Anna's escape and of her displeasure.

The following day Horacio did not go to the lower school. In the afternoon a message came, asking him to take charge of a mission service in place of another, whose turn it was, but who was ill and unable to attend. With considerable vexation of spirit the young man consented to take the work and sent word to the Mission that he would be there. He felt that he was under too great obligations to refuse any such calls, and the evening found him threading his way through crowds gathered in front of the lewd pictures in the book-store windows, or between the countless sprawling babies and through groups of gesticulating Italians, in loud-voiced discussion in front of dingy and squalid houses which, in the daytime,

were cheap restaurants, clothes-cleaning establishments, shoe-shops and small stores. This home-life of "Little Italy" comes into being between six and nine of the evening, on the sidewalk, and very much in the way of pedestrians.

The little mission-room was dim and cheerless, but the crowd soon gathered, after the doors were opened. A portable organ stood in the corner and a young German was at hand to play it. The heavy air of the long-closed room soon grew denser with the odor of the reeking inhabitants of the slums,—Portuguese, negroes, half-castes of various types and Brazilians, with a larger portion of Italians, who make up three fourths of the population of the great city. It was a bit of diversion for them all and yet they were orderly enough, save that some moleques amused themselves for a time by making huge, thick pancakes of the abundant sticky red clay of a neighboring vacant lot, and slapping them down on the sidewalk, after punching a depression in the center with their knuckles, whereupon they would burst with a loud report like a miniature cannon-shot.

By the time Horacio was ready to speak, everything had quieted down, save a child or two in arms, in the audience; and that was a small matter. The young man was blue and disappointed. He stepped before his audience to complete as quickly as possible a somewhat perfunctory task, yet so strange is the network of wires and currents that control our human coil that, of a sudden, he felt such an inspiration as had never been given him before.

He was speaking of the Pearl of Great Price, and, as he spoke, the Pearl went up in value. A realizing sense of the hidden meaning of the parable swept over him. His little talk was not an excoriation of Rome and priestly craft: it was not an exposition of what little he knew of doctrine: it was not a long string of the biggest and highest-sounding words he could put together to make anything like sense: it was simply a sketch of man in his lost estate, in his poverty and wretchedness, in his sin and degradation, in his squalor and suffering; and then, between his thumb and forefinger, he held up the Pearl before them and, as he gazed on it, and his impassioned words flowed on, his audience gazed too, and here and there an eye, bedimmed with sin and vicious living, perceived its gleaming luster and coveted it.

Suddenly he paused and felt that sharp reaction which often comes at such a time. A half-sigh came from the listeners and they sank back in their seats from their strained attention.

"Let us sing, in closing, number two hundred and thirty-five: 'Oh, say, will you go to the Eden on high?' Now, my friends, my brothers! I am only a poor sinning, suffering one like yourselves, but Christ has preciousy redeemed His word and brought me out of bondage. Can I help you? Will you let me? Do you want help? Perhaps my stumbling steps have learned a bit of the road and I may help you with a hand or with a word. After singing this hymn, our little meeting will be closed, but I want to talk with those who care to talk with me. If you

have a question to ask, please stop with us and ask it. Now, let us sing!"

Many lingered for a moment as the crowd went out, but feared their companions' ridicule and went on their ways. Although so many had shown interest, only two remained behind, and one of these was intoxicated, and, leaning against the wall in a corner, slept heavily. A pang shot through the young man's heart as he shook the hand of the young German, who had just closed his organ and was departing, and then he turned to the sole enquirer.

He was a man of thirty-five or thirty-eight years, upon whose face and figure vice had left its unmistakable imprint. He watched Horacio slyly, out of the corner of his eye. Where had that furtive look crossed his before? He could not recall where he had seen the man, but he dropped into the seat beside him and took his hand.

"Well, my friend," he asked, dejectedly, "what can I do for you?" He expected to hear a request for money.

"Don't you know me?" asked the man, cautiously.

"Seems to me I have seen you before, but I can't remember where," replied the student.

"Well, it don't matter. I met you once."

"Where was it? Tell me about it."

"I want to know what is this business about the Pearl," said the man, ignoring the question. "There aint much poetry in me, you know, and I don't take much stock in this sort of thing: in fact, I don't know as I care, anyhow—I was just curious—that is,

I wanted to know——”

Horacio heaved a sigh. “I thought I made it plain enough——” he was saying, when his companion interrupted him.

“That’s true for you. You were plain enough. The trouble is, there aint anything to hitch to. Where do I begin? You don’t for a moment fancy that I am very well contented, this way?” and he waved his hands over his shabby clothes and general wretchedness, with an air of disdain. “You were talking of things that were different—of things that I have dreamed about but never knew. I’ve heard this sort of talk before, I have, but I never took no stock in it. Now—I know there is something in it! Look at me, and look at you! You don’t remember me?”

“No,” repeated Horacio, his interest becoming aroused, “I don’t succeed in placing you.”

“Well—I left you in jail, at Jahú, without a vintem, while I skipped out with a pocketful, and it was all yours. Do you remember, now?”

“Thiago!” cried the student, in amazement. “I remember now. You broke jail, at Jahú, with the rest. Shake hands again, now that I know you!”

The jail-bird drew his hands away. “No,” he said, “you won’t want to shake hands when I tell you. You may call the police, if you want. It was I that took your money from under your pillow, that night, and I kept every vintem—six hundred milreis—and precious little good it ever did me, for I gambled it all away, the next day.”

“Never mind the money,” said Horacio, stifling a

sigh, "what we want now is to straighten out this other matter. I had nearly forgotten the money."

"You must have struck it rich, then," said his companion, eyeing him suspiciously.

"Oh, no," protested the young man, smiling as he thought of the actual condition of his finances, "far from that! I have nothing. In fact, it is only by the kindness of friends that I am enabled to study, in order that I may preach the Gospel."

"Then you hold no grudge? You forgive me?"

"As I hope to be forgiven! Do not bother about my forgiveness, but get right with God. It is against Him you have sinned."

The man bowed his head in his hands. Horacio waited for him to speak. Suddenly, he groped for his hat and started to his feet. Horacio touched his arm and asked: "Thiago,—sha'n't we decide this question to-night? It does not always keep till another day. Jesus Christ stands waiting, and saying: 'My child, give me thine heart!'"

Thiago pulled away his sleeve impatiently from the restraining hand and slipped through the door, without a word. With a sharp twinge of disappointment, Horacio blew out the lights and, after locking the door, walked slowly to the nearest bond.

The following day, which was Sunday, he saw the girls at church, but only the backs of their heads. Anna divided his attention with the sermon, but he was rewarded with no answering look. The next day and the next he had lessons in the evening, for he was now doing extra work again, to complete his

course as soon as possible. He longed to be at work and doing what he could to cancel his debt—in service, if not in kind. He had heard it said that none of the boys had ever returned a vintem of these advances, and, although they were not expected to do so, nevertheless he longed for the opportunity.

On Wednesday he was free, at last, and, feeling bound, by Miss Holland's suggestion, to take a companion, he pulled Plinio away from his books and made him go with him. To his great discomfiture, he found that it was the regular reception-night at the School and the sitting-room was full of guests. Miss Holland greeted the young men cordially and sent for Anna, who came in looking very demure and unapproachable. Horacio's cordial hand encountered a limp one and froze at the touch of it.

"Anna!" he had cried, at sight of her, but now sat down without another word. Presently he found courage again and went on. "Dost thou not wish to hear about the folks?"

"Oh, yes,—tell me!" replied the girl, with a quick gleam of interest.

"Donna Anna—you are from the same place as your cousin, are you not?" interrupted Miss Holland, placidly, as she sat down near them, to help them feel at ease.

"We are not cousins," replied the girl, somewhat tartly.

"Not cousins!" exclaimed the lady, in genuine astonishment. "Why, dear me!—surely I understood Senhor Horacio, in his letter, to say that you were



cousins," and she groped for her glasses and felt in her lap, as if for the letter in question; then contented herself with her handkerchief, which she found lying there, and folded her hands again.

"We were brought up together, as cousins," Horacio explained. "She was the step-daughter of my uncle, and, when he died, she came to live with us."

"But, I thought you had lost your parents."

"I was impressed into the army, and, when I returned, after nearly four years, they were gone. I was told they were dead. I only found them again the day I sent Anna here."

"Ah,—now I understand. What is it, Effie?"—to someone who leaned over her shoulder and whispered. "Yes, yes, I will go. Excuse me, please," and the good lady hurried away.

Anna turned to Horacio and asked: "Are they well? Where are they? How did they get away?"

He laughed. "First,—they are well. Second,—they are on the old place where we used to live together. Third,—they ran away. What else?"

"And Sor André?" ejaculated the girl, as though fearing that he might yet come to trouble her.

"He is nursing a broken leg and has probably forgotten thee by now. He thinks that thou art dead."

"He thinks that I am dead?"

"Yes,—why not? He saw thee floating down the river on Bonito, and gave thee up for lost. Not only that, but he reported thy death to us and I knew no better until I saw thee, last Friday; for I have been to the other church every Sunday since I re-

turned from the sertão."

Anna shot a quick glance at him and flushed at some hidden thought. A thin film of ice seemed to melt away from between them, under the influence of that warm blush.

"I was just about to write to Sor Francisco, to promise to reimburse him for the horse—for Bonito. Is he still alive?"

"What!—didst thou not return by way of Jahú?" she exclaimed. Horacio's heart glowed at the return to the "thou". "Didst thou not see Sor Francisco?"

"No,—I returned by Lençóes. So the horse is still alive, also?"

"Yes, the horse is well," and she briefly recounted the story of her marvellous escape. Horacio's eyes glistened, but he did not interrupt her. When she had finished, he told of their own adventures, and concluded by saying: "I wanted to come and see thee on Saturday, but could not, for I was obliged to go to the mission service in the Braz. I have much more to say to thee, but they are going now and I suppose I must go also."

"Wait until tea is served. Thou dost not need to go. The rest are going for some other reason: I think they have something else on hand."

Horacio's heart grew warm at the invitation. He looked across at Plinio. Plinio was evidently preparing to go with the others.

"There is a magic-lantern entertainment at the church," he explained. Horacio had altogether forgotten it, but he remembered when he was reminded.

"You go along," he urged. "I must stay and talk business with my cousin."

"You don't mind my leaving you, then?" asked his companion. "All right! I'll go," and he hurried after the others.

"Well, well! We are quite deserted," said Miss Holland, plaintively. "You are going to stay, Senhor Horacio? Then I'll send for the tea and we can have it all to ourselves," and she stepped to the door.

"Anna!" cried Horacio, when she had disappeared in the dining-room, "I cannot talk to thee as one can talk in the sertão. Thou art not the same Anna. I am afraid of thee. Tell me, art thou—contented here, at the School?"

Now this was not at all what Horacio had meant to say, but his courage failed him. Anna pursed her lips dubiously. "I was about to ask thee to let me go home," she said, but with a mischievous twinkle in her eye.

"Let—thee—go—home? And what will become of thy schooling, and—of—me?"

"I think thou canst take care of thyself," she answered, laughing gently to herself, "and they must need me at home."

"Need thee! Nonsense! There are two strapping girls to help in the house, and they do not need thee a bit. Besides, they think that thou art drowned and have already forgotten thee."

This last was a bit of teasing, but it hurt. A tear quivered under the long lashes: Horacio saw it and was crushed.

"Oh, Anna, forgive me! I was joking. How could they—how could anyone forget thee?"

The girl looked thoughtful. Miss Holland was still busy about the tea and had not reappeared.

"Thou seest——" she began, and hesitated. After a little moment she continued: "Thou seest—I do not like—I cannot—oh, how can I say it? —I ought not to accept this help from thee."

Horacio's heart sank. "Why didst thou not think of that before coming here, in the first place? This did not come to thine head the other day, there in the forest. Wast thou only afraid of Sor André?"

She looked at him out of a corner of her eye and he was filled with dismay and even remorse, although he felt that somehow he was being ill-used.

"Wilt thou not accept that little from a—cousin—a—a—brother?" he asked, and saw that he had made bad worse, although he did not know why.

"That is what thou saidst when thou sentest me here," she almost whispered, with a queer little gasp, between a laugh and a sob.

"What wouldst thou have me say, perverse girl? If thou wilt not accept from a brother or a cousin, from whom, then, wilt thou accept? Anna—thou dost not mean——? Am I stupid or only a fool?"

His old comrade glanced up at him with a look that was made up of mischief, amusement, pity and a trace of doubt, but, as he caught her eye, both sprang to their feet as if moved by a common impulse. The sight that greeted Miss Holland's perturbed vision, as she pushed open the door, with the

tea-tray a moment later, was enough to spoil the reputation of a double dozen of girls' schools.

"Tut, tut! What is this?" she cried, somewhat sternly.

"Oh, Miss Holland, we are awfully sorry, but we have had no other chance," exclaimed Horacio, with an embarrassed laugh. "I have not seen her for years, and never can find her alone; and now all our muddled affairs are straightened out at last and she is going to be my wife some day. Please forgive us!"

"Well,—it is pretty bad. What will our neighbors say, who may be looking in our windows from across the street? A young man making love to one of our girls! Fie! Why, it would empty our school in a week. And with reason!"

"Oh, we shan't do it any more. Anna will stay with you until I have finished my work at the Seminary, and then she will be a preacher's wife."

"Very well! But, meanwhile, she is a school-girl, and I shall see that she has at least two chaperons when you are near. I am horrified!" and she smiled amiably. "Now, come,—our tea is getting cold."

Horacio gave a mock groan and then laughed. "I am not afraid of you," he said, "and if you will not be too hard on us, I promise to be good."

She shook her head grimly at them both, and passed them tea and cake. When they had eaten, the young man shook hands and departed.

After he had gone the elder woman slipped an arm about the younger one's waist and whispered in her ear: "Did you think that I was long about the tea,

my dear? The servant might have brought it, you know. Oh, by the way,"—gazing about the room in well-feigned surprise; "I wonder if it was I that pulled the curtains down! This is quite unusual. Deary me! I am getting very absent-minded."

Anna blushed and her companion took her face between her hands and kissed her on both cheeks.

"Now, run along to bed, my dear, and dream sweet dreams!" she said, and pushed her pushfully from her.

Horacio heard nothing further of Thiago until a month had passed by. He was fast getting to the last extremity for funds with which to continue his course, when, one day as he passed out of church, the Italian who preached in that language in the little mission in the Braz, handed him an envelope with his name written across the face.

"A decent sort of a fellow asked your full name last night at the Mission, and handed me this, to give to you," he said.

Horacio opened the envelope wonderingly and found a morsel of paper and three notes of ten milreis each. On the bit of paper was written:

"Thiago wishes to get square with you before he gets square with Him. 30\$000, on account."

The following Saturday evening he attended the service at the Mission, but the man was not there. The next week he remained away and the Italian re-

ported that Thiago had been present. Evidently strategy would have to be used. The next Saturday Horacio waited until the service was half completed and then slipped in quietly and sat down near the door. He at once saw, with great satisfaction, that he had penned the ex-convict into a corner. When the meeting was over he moved along the bench and shook hands with him.

"Why do you avoid me, friend Thiago?" he asked. The man laughed nervously and hung his head. Horacio suspected that he feared to trust his own strength, and added, hastily: "How is the soul? I see that the body is in better shape."

Thiago looked up. "I am working now for the "Light and Power", as motorman on a bond. I want to pay you back what I owe you, but I can only send you a little money every month. Have patience and I will make it all right! Then I'll feel better about hunting the Pearl."

"Thiago,—you are right about paying the money, and it will enable me to complete my education, but I should prefer to lose it all rather than have you delay the other matter. By paying the money you cannot make yourself one whit more fit for the Kingdom. You can never be fit for that! Only Christ is worthy, and you must come just as you are and attend to the other matters afterwards. Do you understand?"

The man looked disappointed. "I thought that He would be better satisfied," he muttered.

"Ay, that is true, but He wants you just as you



are, and all these other things you can do for love of Him, afterwards. 'By grace are ye saved, through faith, and that not of yourselves. Not of works, lest any man should boast.' That is what the Apostle Paul says. Don't you see it?"

"So I can come just as I am?"

"Yes."

"And supposing I do not pay the money, afterward?" with a momentary return of his old sly look.

"That is for you to settle with Him. I have no fear for my money," he added, with a smile.

"I did not understand that it was free," objected the man; "I thought that the Pearl must be bought."

"So it must be. You must give up all that you have—man's only independent possession—your will."

"Then I give it!" exclaimed Thiago, joyfully. "I understand now, I think."

"Let us pray!" whispered Horacio, with emotion, and the two ex-convicts dropped on their knees together, in the quiet of the dingy little room.



## Epilogue

Three years after the conversion of Thiago, numbers of country-people might have been seen gathering one Sunday morning from far and wide, from sitio and fazenda, scattered leagues apart in the edge of the sertão. Some came on foot and some on horseback, but all converged toward a little clearing, near the boundary of the property of Horacio's father.

In the center of this clearing stood a little brick church, in whose shadow, upon a long bench, sat a dozen mothers nursing their babes, that they might be silent during the service about to take place. Inside the building rude benches occupied the central space; a table neatly covered with a linen cloth stood at the farther end, and a wee organ—the gift of an American friend—was placed in the corner near it.

At the table sat Horacio and at the organ, a dainty little woman whose large dark eyes rested lovingly upon the figure at the desk, awaiting the signal for the Doxology. In a moment the young man nodded, the organ sounded and the row of mothers filed into the church with the babes at their breasts. The little congregation arose and sang with pious fervor:

“A Deus, Supremo Bemfeitor,  
Anjos e homens dêem louvor:  
A Deus o Filho, a Deus o Pae,  
E ao Espirito, gloria dae.”

While these simple people worship, let us look farther. Down by the creek, at the edge of the clearing, a great bare patch of rugged and scarred ground and piles of over-burnt and under-burnt brick and tiles mark the spot where Horacio and a couple of his parishioners found material for construction. Some of the fazendeiros provided the wood for the timbers and shaped them at their mills. The young Minister himself did the chief part of the work on the edifice. His salary is one hundred milreis a month, and even that is hard to collect, although it is only twenty-five dollars of American money.

Besides the little congregation, which we have seen, he has a trimestral itinerary to cover, which includes some twenty groups of believers and carries him fifty leagues from home. From these people he receives a small additional stipend.

A little cottage near the church is his home, and is dearer because his hands have fashioned it, but dearest by far because of the great loving eyes that are the light of it.

In a stable, behind the cottage, stands an old horse, a present from Sor Francisco da Gama dos Santos, who is now a stalwart supporter of the little church in Jahú. The horse is old, but still has plenty of joyful vigor for the sober service of the Minister, and bears him whither his duty calls him, through the sertão. We know the horse and love him as well as he knows and loves his master and mistress.

Over the mantel, in the little sala, hangs Horacio's rifle, and its days of service are no more ended than

are Bonito's. The hunter has become a "fisher", but he has not ceased to be a hunter.

At the door of a little cabin, not far from the cottage, any other day than Sunday, an old man may be seen turning and twisting a long black rope of "nigger-head", or reading from a great brass-clasped book. The "nigger-head" is not for the market but for his own faithful and malodorous cachimbo. His aged and devoted helpmeet is either busied over at the Minister's or is, perhaps, beating fleeces into felt for saddle-blankets with a heavy maul. A week's labor and an uncertain market may give her a profit of five milreis, which goes to the Seminary fund. She has enough for herself without it, but means to enjoy this last luxury of labor through her declining years or as long as her sinewy old arms can lift the maul.

Old José Capitão and his "woman" are companions for Donna Anna during Horacio's frequent absences, and will never know a want as long as he can fill it.

And what of Alfredo? Not long after the Presbytery dropped him, in despair, he secured employment selling tickets for the "Jogo do Bicho", that terrible animal-lottery which is the curse of Brazil.

Sor André is no longer the terror of his neighborhood. A less scrupulous opponent wiped him out about a year after he had recovered from his broken leg. The little farm which Horacio saved for his father, has lately been sold at a fair price, and the money has gone to pay for a bit of schooling for

Eugenia and Luiza. Horacio is tutoring his brothers when he has leisure. The little fazenda has prospered and his father insists on paying for the tuition.

Upon the roll of members of the little church the names of all the de Castros figure among the first-fruits of Horacio's labors.

One of the Elders of the little church is called Thiago, for he has become a small fazendeiro, after faithfully discharging his debt and pulling his friend through the rest of his course, without further help from the Presbytery.

At the last, when Horacio graduated, Thiago made a final payment of one hundred and fifty milreis, which went to purchase a long black coat for the Minister of the Sertão.



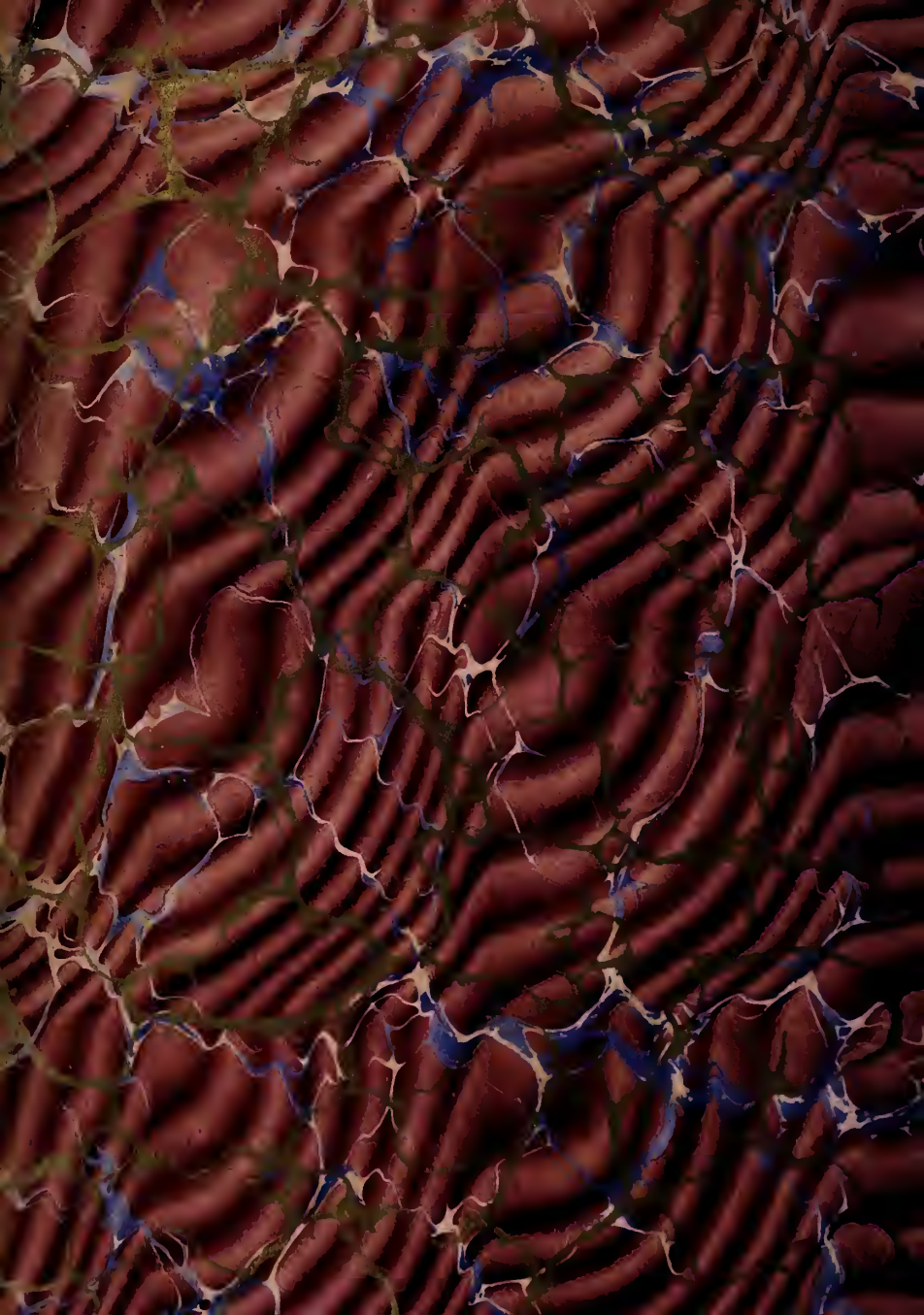


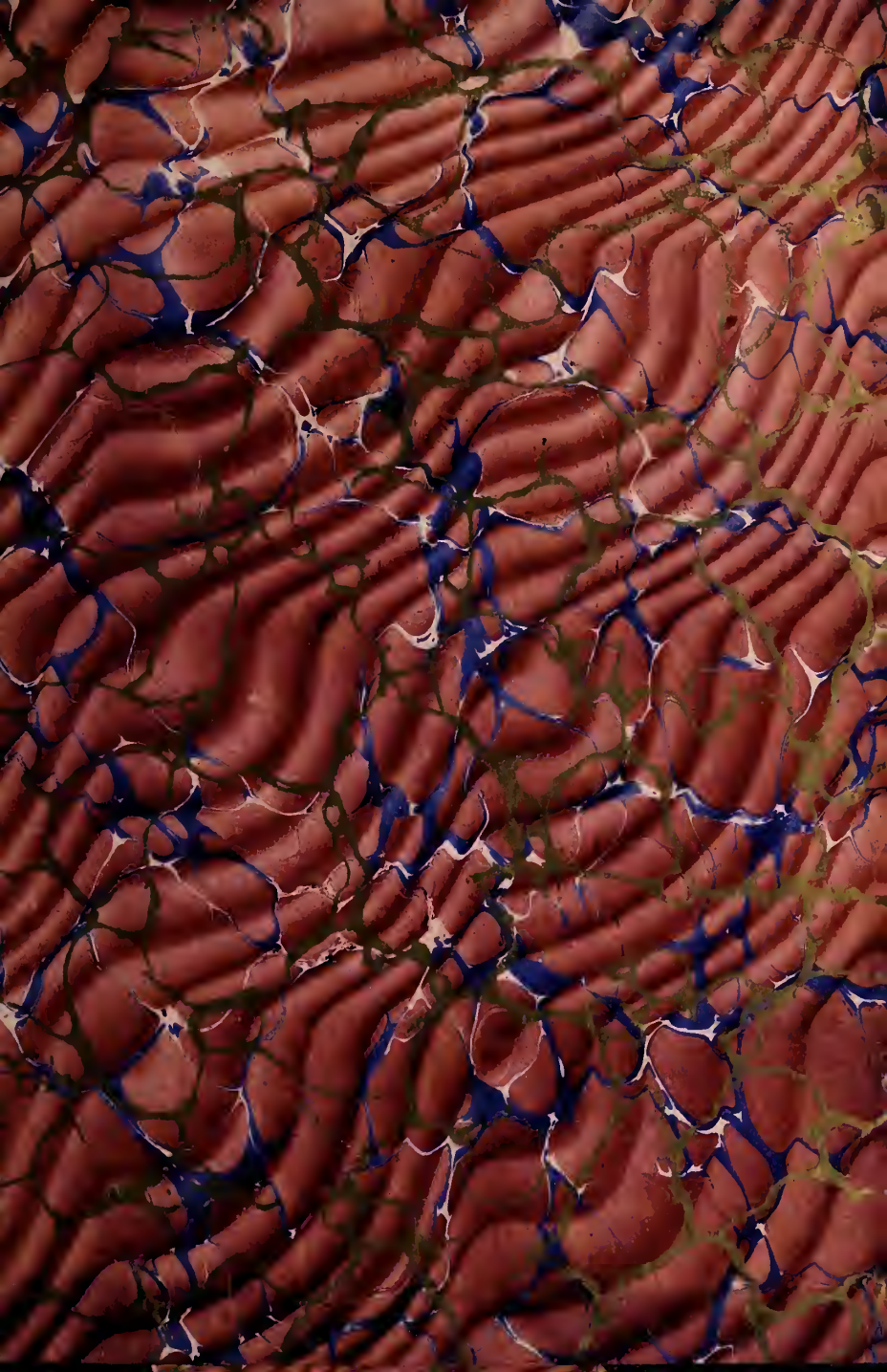








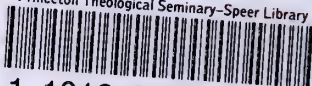






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